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Model AIRPLANE INTERNATIONAL

February 2016
£4.50 / Issue 127

www.modelairplaneinternational.com

IT'S SHOWTIME!

MORE HIGHLIGHTS FROM LAST YEAR'S SCALE MODELWORLD SHOW

NEW BUILDS INSIDE

KIT PREVIEWS

AVANTE GARDE MODELS 1:48 MIG-31 FOXHOUND

REVELL 1:72 AVRO SHACKLETON AEW2

ITALERI 1:32 MIRAGE IIIC

KIT BUILD

LADY IN RED

We build Zoukei-Mura's superb 1:32 Focke-Wulf Ta152 H-0

KIT BUILD

AFRICAN STORM

THE AIRFIX 1:48 HURRICANE AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE

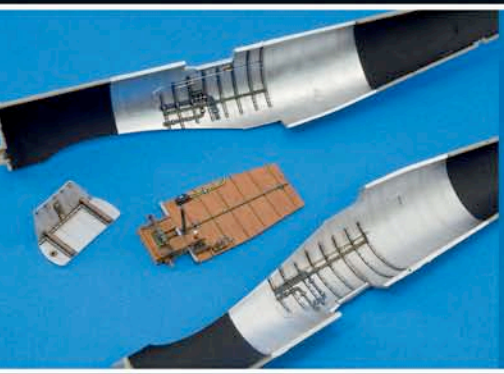
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EDITORIAL



When does inspiration turn to intimidation..?

In this job you have many conversations about the hobby, most of them about the models that we build, the kits that are released and the ideas that we use. Occasionally a conversation will come out of the blue that takes you completely by surprise and leaves you simply walking away, scratching your head.

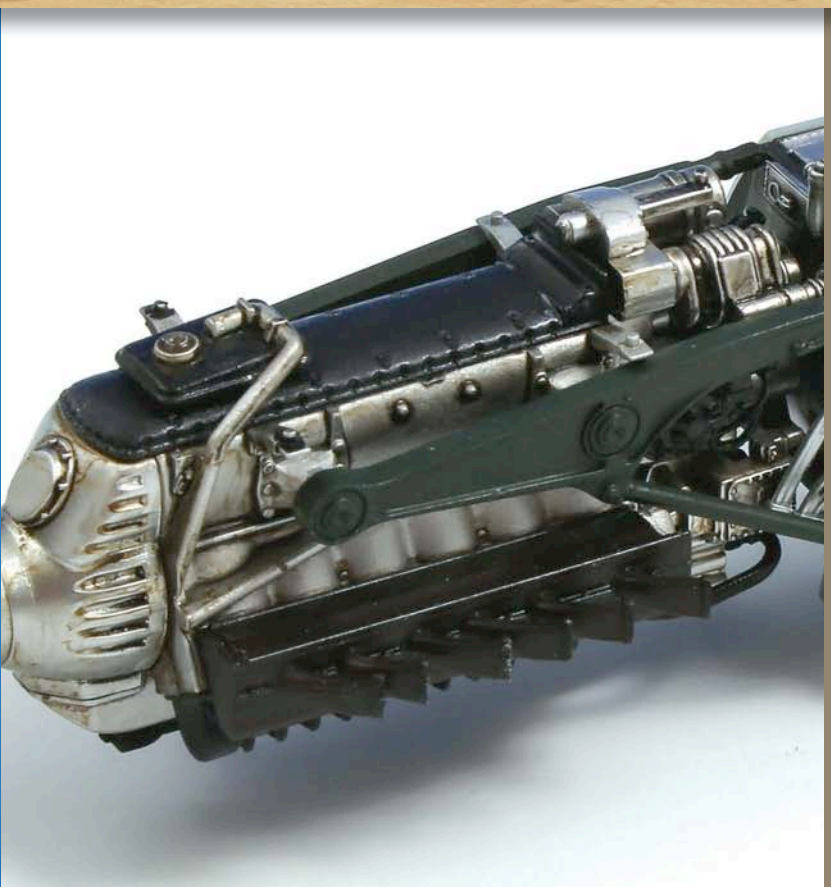
At a model show recently I was in conversation with friends about magazines when a chap offered the idea that models built for most magazines were simply too good and that rather than inspiring modellers to actually build a kit, they were putting them off, the quality seen being beyond what some modellers could ever hope to attain. As you can imagine, I was certainly not in agreement with this idea, but it did lead me to wonder if that was a one-off though, or a more prevalent feeling.

Looking back now, I had some sympathy for his feelings, but really no more than that. Modelling titles such as this really are aspirational products, offering articles that we hope will help you to learn from experienced modellers, who we hope will help you build better models. We could build models that are squarely aimed at the most inexperienced modellers and only them, painting each one with a paintbrush, tube glue and not worrying about the results, but we feel that in so doing, we would be reducing the levels of inspiration that you would gain from such features to almost nil!

When I started building models in the mid-seventies, I only had the kids in the village to learn from. One in particular I remember as being very good and far from being intimidated by what he did, I wanted to be better than him and so tried — with my limited resources — to learn from him and improve as I went along. Most of the time it was an unmitigated disaster, but I tried! When I discovered modelling magazines from the first time in 1979, a whole new world opened up to me. I could examine for hours on end all manner of amazing models and that lead me to try all manner of new ideas, kits, techniques and subjects that I wouldn't have imagined possible - and little by little, I became a better modeller. I spent hours copying other models, reading how the builders had achieved a certain effect and then trying to emulate that effect. I seem to remember spending one summer converting a Matchbox Piston Provost into a Winjeel, just because someone had carried out that conversion in the Airfix Magazine. It never was finished; after burning my fingers over and over trying to mould a new canopy, I gave up - but you get the picture!

Last month we discussed the use of different colour schemes to make models in MAI stand out from those seen elsewhere. That idea is also in place to try and push you into other directions that you may find interesting. This month you'll see two models, my Hurricane and John Wilkes' Ta-152 that are both painted in schemes that are not supplied in the kits. Though interesting and attractive, they are also simple to recreate, needing almost no additional expense - even John's '152 could be recreated without using the decals that we used, the markings being





so simple. Attractive schemes aside, we hope though that when you look at the models you are inspired to do something similar yourself, not put off by how we've achieved what we have!

Going back to our original point, we feel that any magazine should have the wow factor. When I look through magazines or modelling books, I want to look at the models with a sense of wonder. I want to spend time wondering how the modeller had approached their project. Every month I see new ideas and want to try them out, hoping that if I do, my models will get better. And that's the point of what we do: to hopefully make you better.

Years ago magazines were organs that offered not only modelling features, but more often than not, reference articles that provided information that had hitherto remained undiscovered. Today, the model is king and that means that the pendulum has swung over towards model-only titles. That being so, it would be remiss of us to not try and provide the best builds we can - and if we can also provide technical information along the way, all the better.

Having thought about that conversation over the last few weeks, I've found myself disagreeing with the idea that we should provide only for the most inexperienced in our hobby more and more, because that would be a race to the bottom and that's not what we are all about. We are here to inspire and entertain and hopefully, within that framework, provide you with features that you will enjoy, learn from and like me, all those years ago, want to copy…





IN THIS ISSUE...

Welcome to the February 2016 issue of MAI! In this issue you will find plenty of fun features that we hope will help you through the remaining months of winter, including Mike Thompson's look at the Trumpeter 1:48 De Havilland Sea Hornet, the editor's build of the excellent Airfix 1:48 Hawker Hurricane MK.I and John Wilkes' take on the spectacular Zoukei-Mura 1:32 Ta152H-0. This month we have also previewed a number of very important new kit releases, all of which will for the basis of in-depth reviews later this year. Amongst these are the Revell 1:72 Avro Shackleton AEW2, AMK 1:48 MiG-31 Foxhound and Italeri 1:32 Mirage IIIC. All of these kits show that the hobby is in rude health, each being highly prized subjects that will delight modellers keen to add to their post-war collections. They'll certainly be keeping us busy for a few months, or until other new kits arrive!

This then is the February edition of Model Airplane International - we hope you like it!





NEWSLINE



KINETIC

www.kineticmodel.com

WHEN TWO SEATS ARE BETTER THAN ONE…

Following on from their collection of single seaters, Kinetic's next Mirage variants will be the delightful IIID/DS (ref.48054) according to their Facebook page. With so little attention given to these trainers, it's fantastic to see one about to appear! We have no further information as yet, but can assure you that as soon as we hear anything more, we'll pass it on!



MERIT INTERNATIONAL

merit-intl.com/meritnew/

LITTLE AND LARGE, READY FOR YOUR COLLECTIONS…

Merit has announced two new models for the collector, one fully assembled and painted and the other, a stock plastic kit ready to be enjoyed by the enthusiast. The two models are as follows:

1:18 UH-1 Huey B 501st Aviation Battalion 'Firebirds' (built & painted) - MM60029
1:48 Grumman J2F-5 Duck (kit)

For more information, please visit the Pocketbond website: www.pocketbond.co.uk





ACADEMY

www.academy.co.kr



LET'S HOIST THE JOLLY ROGER!

We've discussed this kit before, so it's good to see Academy's superb 1:72 F-4J on sale once more. We were certainly very impressed by the quality of the details and sophistication of the parts, it's 'snap-together' approach certainly not compromising its authenticity! The kit features:

- MCP (Multi Coloured Parts)
- Can be assembled without paint or glue
- Decal variation
- Accurately detailed panel lines and rivets
- Various air-to-surface and air-to-air weapons included
- Cartograf decals

For more information, please visit the Pocketbond website: www.pocketbond.co.uk

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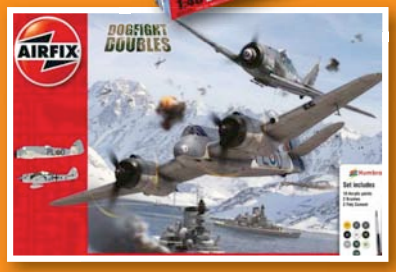
www.airfix.com

PLENTY OF NEW KITS TO TAKE YOU THROUGH 2016!

1:72 Bristol Beaufighter Mk.X Focke-Wulf Fw190 - 8 Dogfight Doubles Gift Set
1:72 Grumman F4F-4 Wildcat
1:72 Battle of Britain - 75th Anniversary Gift Set
1:72 Nakajima B5N2 'Kate' Grumman Wildcat F4F4 Dogfight Doubles Gift Set
1:48 English Electric Lightning F1/F1A/F2/F3







MENG MODEL

www.meng-model.com

ALL HAIL THE ULTIMATE INTERCEPTOR!

After WWII, the rapid development of the Soviet Union's nuclear deterrent pushed the U.S. to develop a series of interceptors in response to the threat of the Soviet's strategic bombers. As a result, the F-106A Delta Dart interceptor was developed from the imperfect Convair F-102A Delta Dagger interceptor and thanks to its advanced electronic equipment and excellent operational performance, it became the main interceptor used by the U.S. military during much of the Cold War. The F-106A first flew in the late 1950s and retired from operational use in 1988. Because of its advanced technology, it was never exported, the F-106A being as a result, called the "Ultimate Interceptor".



MENG's newly tooled DS-006 Convair F-106A Delta Dart Interceptor plastic model kit offers very high levels of detail. The kit includes radar and avionics equipment compartment interiors, weapons bay interiors and complete air inlets. Modellers can select the angles of all the control surfaces. Doors of the weapons bay can be built open or closed. Two different types of instrument panels, ejection seats, drop tanks and main landing gear tyres are included for you to build an F-106A from different periods. This kit contains all the common weapons of the F-106A, including four AIM-4 F/G air-to-air missiles, an AIR-2 nuclear rocket with a trailer and an M61A1 20 mm machine gun pod. Three paint schemes from different squadrons are provided, covering every stage from F-106A's entry into service in the early 1960s, to its retirement at the end of the 1980s.

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AVANT GARDE AMK88001 1:48
IAI Kfir C2/C7 Due early Jan 2016
Aircraft kits (injection)
Future Releases
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AVANT GARDE AMK88002 1:48
Aero L-29 Delfin Due early Jan 2016
Aircraft kits (injection)
Future Releases
£23.99



AVANT GARDE AMK88003 1:48
Mikoyan MiG-31BM Foxhound Due early Jan 2016
Aircraft kits (injection)
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AVANT GARDE AMK88004 1:48
Fouga CM.170 Magister Due early Jan 2016
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KIT PREVIEW

ITALERI 1:32 MIRAGE IIIC

IAIN OGILVIE TAKES A DETAILED LOOK AT THE VERY IMPRESSIVE ITALERI 1:32 MIRAGE IIIC

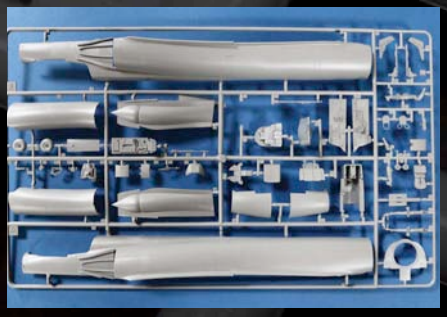
For one of the most famous post war jets the Mirage III family has been poorly served in this scale - with only Revell's Mirage IIIE/V kits from the early 70's being available to feed that francophile fetish. This brand new kit from Italeri fills a gap in the market and, compared to the old Revell kits, features modern tooling, photo-etched parts and superb decals; a pretty complete package.

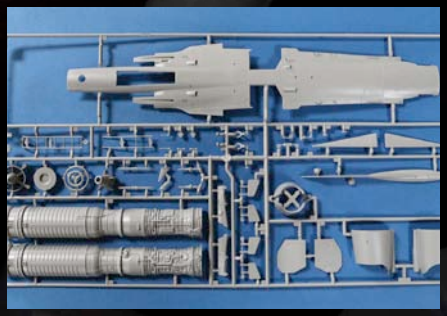
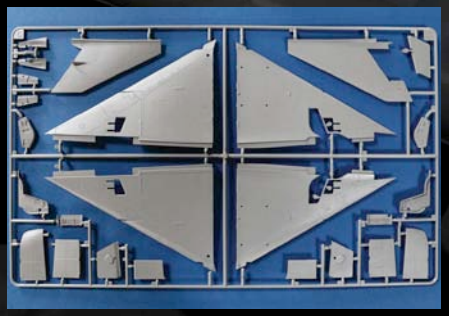
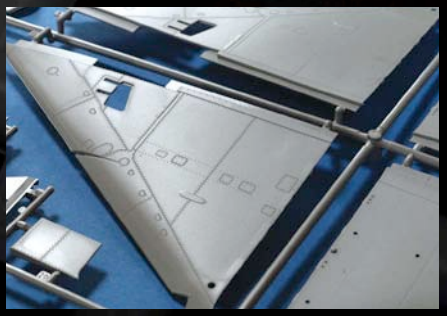
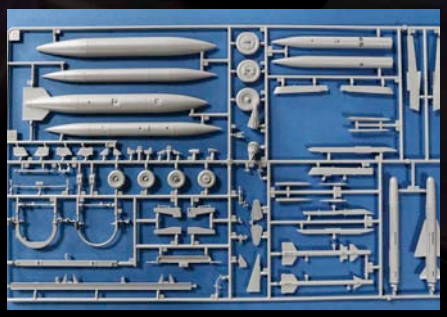
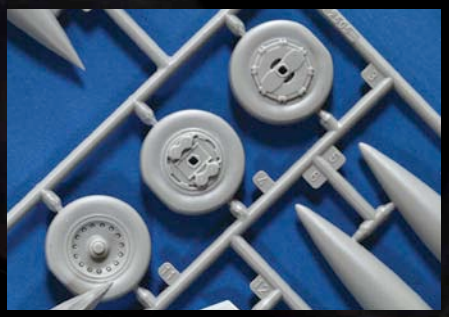
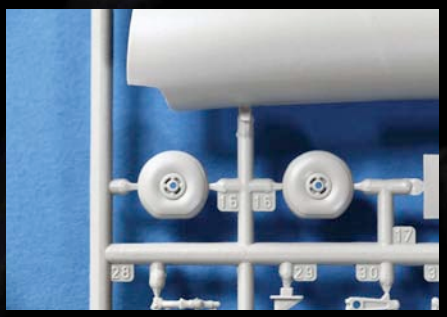
Plastic is the familiar light grey styrene with recessed panels and raised details where necessary. The surface has a grainy texture which could probably do with being polished back if doing one of the natural metal schemes. On the fuselage tops there is a mould line where an insert has been used - the alignment isn't perfect so there are some lines that will need filling. With the breakdown of parts, and some of these mould inserts, I wouldn't be surprised to see other variants appear - with Kinetic having announced a IIIE I wouldn't be surprised if these are based on common mouldings - we'll see I guess.

As with many other recent large scale jets this kit includes a full engine and this can be displayed separately on a nicely detailed engine trolly. Also included is a pilot's boarding ladder, always a nice touch. Canopy parts look nicely clear and free from distortion.

Detail is generally very good, if a little woolly in places. Some parts will need cleaning up a little before use. Good to see plastic wheels and tires (rather than that soft black 'rubber' stuff), although they've succumbed to current modelling fashion with some tyre 'flatting', especially the nose wheel. Main legs may be a little on the fragile side on the completed model, but proof, as they say, will be in the building. The instrument panel is basic - and appears closer to a IIIE panel than a IIIC one on first pass.

Instructions look fairly clear, the Mirage isn't a particularly complex airframe, and is based on CAD renderings. These include a lot of 'grey scaling' that, personally, I'd rather was just black and white for clarity. The booklet includes full colour drawings for each of the supplied schemes.





The kit includes a nice variety of stores for your Mirage, along with suitable stencilling - both for stores and relevant pylons:

- Matra R-530 x2
- Matra R-550 'Magic' x2'
- AIM9-B Sidewinder x2
- JL-100R combined rocket pods/fuel tanks x2
- RP-18R 500 litre supersonic tanks x2
- RP-62 1300 litre tanks x2

The etched fret is nicely done and includes parts for the afterburner section, as well as seat straps, rear-view canopy mirrors and a number of other details.

Decals are by Cartograph and are a highlight of the kit; beautifully printed with good colour saturation and register. One comment I will make is that the South African national markings should have a gold springbok, rather than orange. Six different schemes are provided covering a really good spread of Mirage IIIC options:

- Mirage IIIC Armée de l'Air, '44' of Escadron de Chasse 3/10 'Vexin' based in Djibouti 1980 in a middle stone, dark earth, light blue desert scheme
- Mirage IIIC Armée de l'Air, '16' of Escadron de Chasse 10/1 'Valois based at Creil-Senils, France 1978 in a gray and flat aluminium scheme
- Mirage IIIC Armée de l'Air, '17' of Escadron de Chasse 2/5 'Ile de France' based at Orange Caritat, France 1967 in natural metal
- Mirage IIICZ South African Air Force (SAAF) 2 Squadron 'Flying Cheetahs' based at Waterkloof Air Base, Pretoria, South Africa 1982 in the sand, green and light grey 'bush' scheme
- Mirage IIIC J-2201 of the Swiss Air Force, 1967 in natural metal
- Mirage IIICJ 'Shahak 59' of 101 Squadron Isreali Air Force based at Hatzor Airbase during the 6 Day War, June 1967 in natural metal

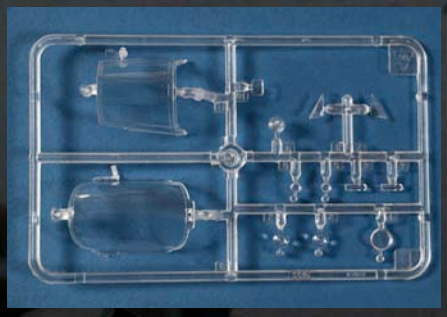
All colours are provided with equivalent FS595a colour references, always useful!

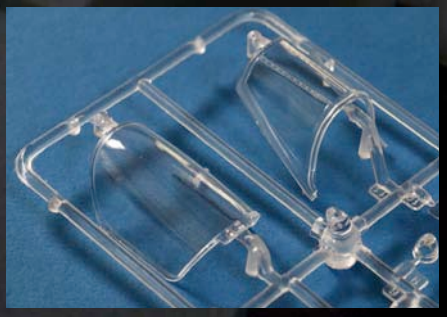
Missing from our review sample was the supplementary sheet for stencil placement, along with a very small addendum decal sheet that is now supplied with the kit.

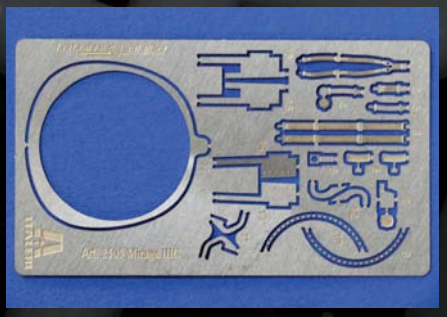
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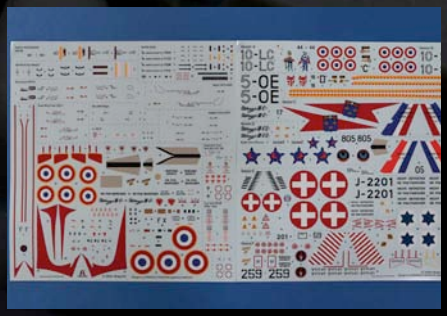
We've already made a start on a full build article and the model is coming together well, subject to a little fettling of parts to clean up and fit. Watch this space…

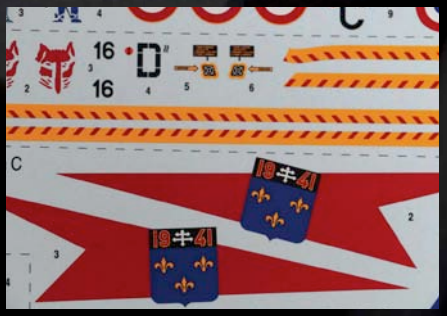
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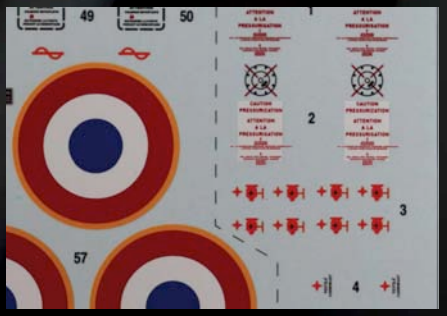


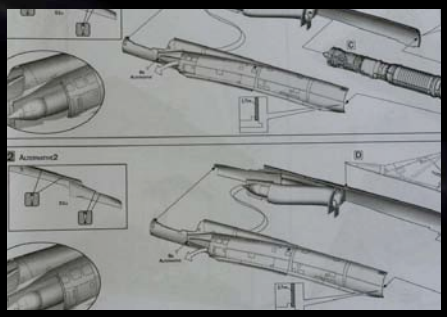


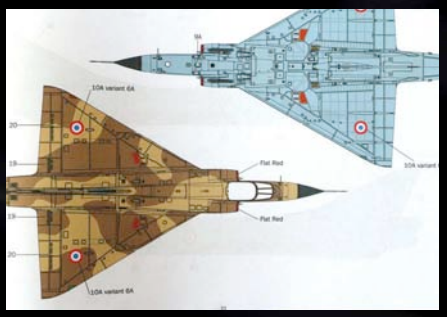


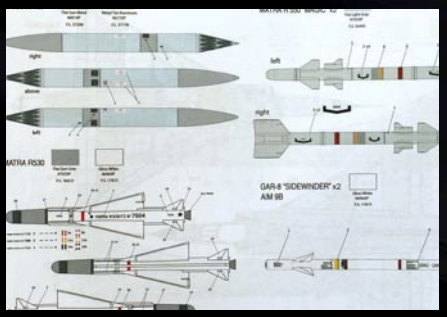












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MIDDLE WALLOP

OUT AND ABOUT MIDDLE WALLOP SHOW REPORT: MISSILES, MICROSCALE AND AN M3…

I've been going to the Aircraft Enthusiasts Fair and Model Show at the Army Air Corps Museum in Hampshire since it started more than five years ago. I have to confess that many of the kits bought at these past shows are still in the 'to get around to' corner of the stash. But that doesn't stop me grabbing my wallet and heading to the show - dodging the pheasants that wander the surrounding leafy country lanes on the way.

This year there seemed to be more kit traders than in past years, which is always a good sign. A mere ten minutes after arriving I'd snapped up a couple of 1/72 Revell MiG-31 Foxhounds and an old ESCI F-5B. Then it was onto the second-hand books followed by a stop at Collectakit for some old Microscale decals.

More than seven model clubs were present with IPMS Gloucester having an impressive selection of 1/48 World War Two fighters on show. But aircraft were not the only models on display. The Tank Museum Volunteer Modellers brought with them a great collection of AFVs past and present and some Japanese motorcycles that had as much chrome as you could possibly want on a kit!

Show organiser Mark Roberts is to be congratulated for providing just what us aviation and modelling enthusiasts want just before winter sets in and we hibernate. Keep up the great work - and see you in 2016.

Just one part of the Collectakit's trading stand is 'buzzed' by a restored Slingsby Kirby Kite G285. This sport glider from the 1930s was pressed into RAF service as a trainer during World War Two.



Anytime baby - it wouldn't be a proper model show without a Tomcat. This 1/48 F-14A is in the colours of VF-33 'Starfighters' and was seconds from launch.



Members of the South Hants Military Modelling Society displayed a 1/72 Airfix Lancaster, converted to a post-war Lancastrian using the elderly M&E Conversion set…a welcome change from Bomber Command colours.



Air Cadets from IPMS Dorset and Wiltshire Branch are regular attendees of model shows in the area. This time they brought this sharp-looking Seafire XVII in a post-war training scheme.



A perfectly airbrushed Vietnam-era camouflage scheme on this A-1H Skyraider was evident. But it was a little bit too clean for my taste and lacked the familiar exhaust stains present on all Spads.



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eduard



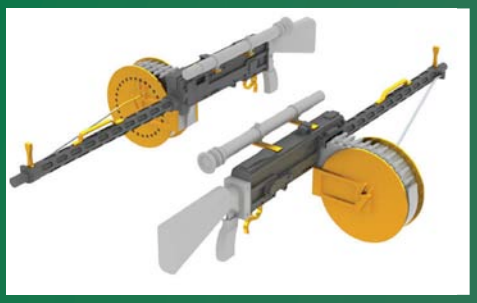
EDK1143
Eduard - 1:48 Rockn' Rhino (Limited Edition)



EDK70116
Eduard 1:72 Fw 190A-5



EDK84141
Eduard 1:48 Spitfire Mk.XVI Bubbletop



EDB632071
Eduard Brassin 1:32 MG14/17 Parabellum WW1 Gun



EDB632073
Eduard Brassin 1:32 P-39 Wheels Late



EDB648231
Eduard Brassin 1:48 Lau-3/A



EDB648233
Eduard Brassin 1:48 US 108gal Paper Tanks



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Eduard Brassin 1:72 MiG-29A Exhaust Nozzles



EDB672093
Eduard Brassin 1:72 MiG-29A Ejection Seat



EDB672094
Eduard Brassin 1:72 MiG-29A Izdelye 9-12 Cockpit



EDB672095
Eduard Brassin 1:72 Fw 190A Wheels Early

Revell / MONOGRAM



RVM5269
Revell Monogram 1:48 Stearman Aerobatic Biplane



RVM5535
Revell Monogram 1:32 P-51B Mustang



RVM5536
Revell Monogram 1:48 UH-1D Huey Gunship



RVM5718
Revell Monogram 1:48 B-29 Superfortress



RV03954
Revell 1:72 DHC-6 Twin Otter Swisstopo



RV03959
Revell 1:48 Spitfire Mk.II



RV04986
Revell 1:72 EC135 Air Glaciers

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KIT PREVIEW



REVELL 1:72 AVRO SHACKLETON AEW.2

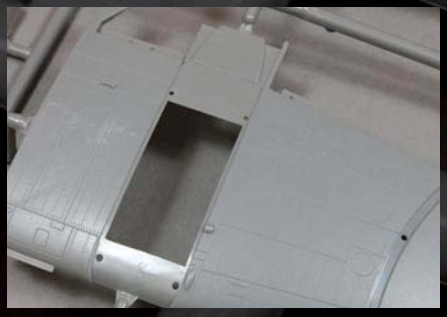
The Avro Shackleton was a British long-range maritime patrol aircraft used by the Royal Air Force (RAF) and the South African Air Force (SAAF). It was developed by Avro from the Avro Lincoln bomber, itself being a development of the famous wartime Avro Lancaster bomber. It was replaced by Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft in the 1970s. The aircraft was also adapted for airborne early warning (AEW) roles within the RAF, replaced by the Boeing E-3 Sentry in 1990. The type is named after the polar explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton.

Entering service with the RAF in 1951, the Shackleton was used primarily in the anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) roles; it also became used as a search and rescue (SAR) platform and for performing several other secondary roles such as being a troop-transport. In later life, a small number of the RAF's Shackletons were subsequently adapted for airborne early warning (AEW) duties, performing in this capacity until the type's retirement in 1991. The Shackleton was also procured by South Africa, and was operated by the SAAF between 1957 and 1984. (Wikipedia)

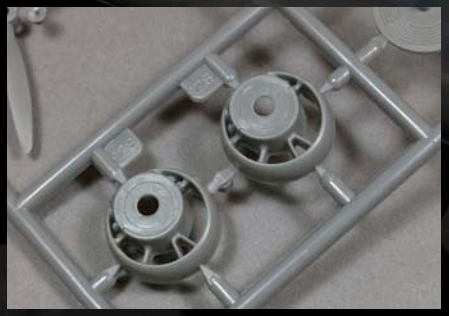
The release of a Shackleton by Revell has been know for some time, so the chance to actually look at some of the early test-shots, is welcome. We should reiterate that the shots seen here are not the final product, so this initial look at what's likely to appear in the final kit, can only be cursory. That said, we can offer an insight into detail and features, if not accuracy - changes may be being made as this is written.

Revell has taken the opportunity to create the AEW.2, thus offering a model that is different from the Airfix MR2. This is a good move because modellers who are keen to build this impressive aircraft will no doubt now build both kits, something that may not have been the case had they both offered the same variant.

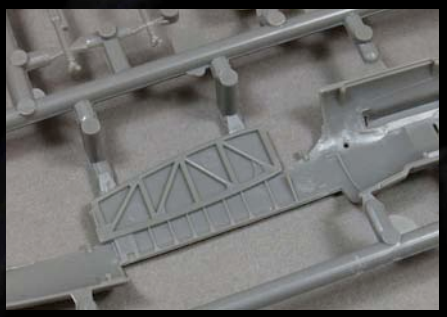
Checking the parts we are presented with a large number of finely moulded plastic components that will combine to create the finished model. The kit is of course large in dimension, the wings and













fuselage being sizeable, even in 1:72. The fuselage is broken down into front and rear sections (thus pointing to other variants perhaps?), each being a fair chunk of plastic that point to the size of the completed model. We haven't checked fit as yet, but the interlinking tabs that will connect both sections look to offer a precise fit, so we will assume - for now - that it will assemble easily.

There are plenty of features to enjoy. There's a fully appointed cockpit, weapons bay, undercarriage and propeller features, separate control surfaces allowing flexibility when it comes to the look of the final model, ailerons, elevators, rudders and flaps all being individual items. A large spar that spaces the fuselage, also acts as a positive anchor that will allow the huge wings to be slid into place after painting, much as you could with Revell's recent Halifax kit.

Construction looks to be familiar, anyone who's built a four-engined bomber finding little to surprise or confuse. It was good to see that items such as the undercarriage legs can be fixed in place after the engine nacelles have been completed, rather than as part of their construction - easier this way and less likely to cause damage during painting.

Surface detail looks to be very good indeed with lots of panel lines and rivets to enjoy. The depiction of the exhausts on the engine nacelles is also pleasing, as it the large underfuselage radar fairing that sits over the well-detailed and somewhat cavernous, weapons bay.

The kit includes decals for two different Shackletons. The choices are as follows:

• Avro Shackleton AEW.2, No.8 Squadron, Royal Air Force, Lossiemouth, Scotland, late 1973.

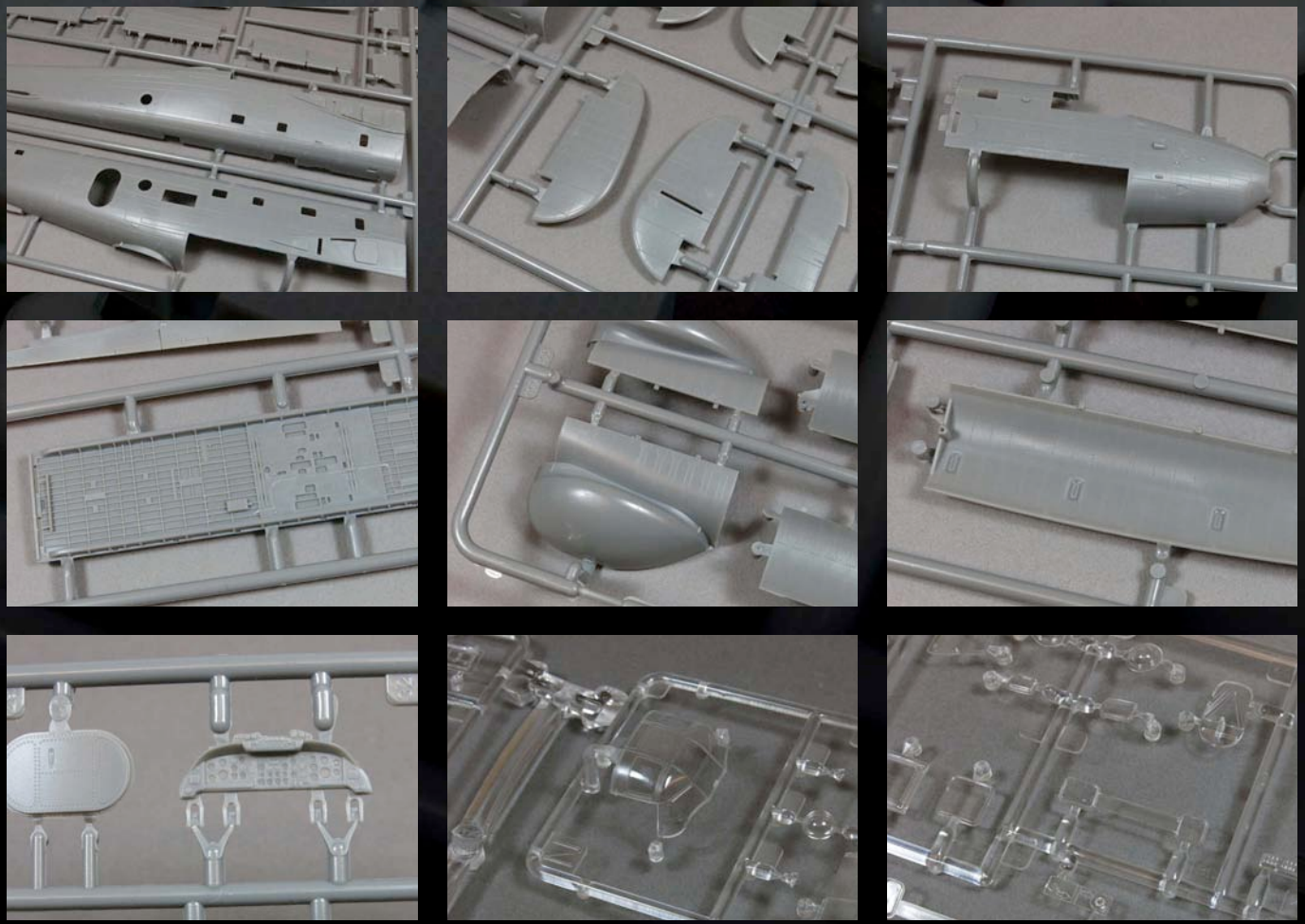
• Avro Shackleton AEW.2, No.8 Squadron, Royal Air Force, Lossiemouth, Scotland, June 1981.

Decals look to be well-printed and accurate in colour and detail. The instruction — now in Revell's newly designed format — offer plenty of details regarding colours and decals location.

FINAL VERDICT

This is a large and complex kit that will find much favour with modellers. We have yet to try fitting the parts together, but assume that it will go together well and result in a fine looking model - as indeed was proven by the completed kit seen last year in Telford. Thanks to Revell for the chance to examine this early test shot.

"Revell has taken the opportunity to create the AEW.2, thus offering a model that is different from the Airfix MR2"



SHOWTIME



Zoukie-Mura's Horten looked superb in natural metal and wood.



WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY SPENCER POLLARD

ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR

Last month we looked at the competition from Scale Modelworld 2015 in Telford, so decided this time around to look at some of the new kits seen, as well as some of the models found on the dozens of club stands. Let's take a look!



The Overseas Section of the IPMS show is always popular and well-attended. The standard of models in this area was superb…

The highlight of Revell's trade stand was their new Shackleton AEW2, details of which can be seen on pages 48 & 49 of this magazine.





Box art for ZM's latest 1:48 kit. Heads-up: this another superb kit and one that will delight fans of the unusual.



ZM's next target on the road to world domination, will be a family of 1:48 Phantoms…



Revell had a huge presence at the show, many of their new kits being seen for the first time. Here's their new 1:72 Hawk, resplendent in Red Arrows markings.



Wonderland Models are always a major presence at Telford. Many bargains could be found amongst the kits on sale.



The Soviet Aircraft SIG: a stunning collection.

SHOWTIME







Perhaps the star of the show - the Airfix 1:72 Victor B2 shows off for the camera. Though only shown in mock-up form, this looks likely to be another fine addition to the Airfix range.



One of the best models seen in Telford was this incredible, scratchbuilt, 1:32 Tigercat. Detail was astonishing!



Revell had two new Tornado kits on their stand, the 1:48 Tornado GR.4 being seen here…
…With their 1:32 German IDS in Tiger Meet markings, being the star of this shot!



Revell's stand is always well laid out, attracting hundreds of eager visitors over the weekend.





Though the Victor was very impressive, the sight of the new Airfix 1:48 Meteor F8 was a real treat. Detail and accuracy look to be very impressive!







The Braz stand was chock-full of all manner of accessories, kits and details aimed at the 1:144 airline enthusiast.



The Freightdog stand revealed some interesting new items, including an upgrade for the venerable Frog Javelin. We'll be taking a detailed look at the Swift conversions in a future edition of MAI.



Drewe Manton's 1:32 Tamiya Mosquito graced the Hobby Company stand.



A very neat display from Tim Alexander Maunder, showed off many of the Mosquito's stunning features.



Box art for Zvezda's soon to be released, IL-2 Sturmovik.



We are excited by the news that Kinetic will be releasing an Su-33, so it was great to see the test-shots on display in Telford.



Another new kit from Kinetic, the 1:48 Etendard looked to be very good in this raw state…



…As did Kinetic's Sea Harrier FRS.1!



HK Model's mock-up of their future 1:32 Lancaster was a dominant display at Telford. Where would you put it?!



We have a soft spot for the Liberator, so are always happy to see superb examples on the club display tables.

SHOWTIME

Aircraft dioramas are nowhere near as popular as those built around armour, so it's always good to see them on show, this one built around a B-25 Mitchell, being particularly nice.



The NASA SIG had a fantastic collection of models on display in Telford.



It was great to see the guys from Ireland, display in Telford.



One of the nicest displays in Telford was this collection of Balkan aircraft.



Model and reference in perfect harmony - what a superb display!



There have been some gorgeous Tornado schemes over the years, this overall orange Manching aircraft being one of the most impressive.



Seeing a Ju88 in French markings was a treat!



In the news recently, the Su-24 looks superb in miniature - especially when it's this nicely finished.



Not all models have to be military!



There can be no denying that the Mirage family make great models - 'Mephisto' being a fine example!



Japanese F-15 are some of the most attractive aircraft flying today, so are rightly popular amongst modellers.



Hard to believe that this Tornado is built from the Italeri kit - what a stunning model!



Some of the gorgeous Vector details seen on the Neomega stand. Detail on these resin details, is extraordinary.



Your starter for ten: name this Russian machine..?



The Beriev Be-200ChS is a beautiful aircraft and a perfect choice for a model.

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KWIK BUILD

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

SCALE 1:48

TRUMPETER

SPECIFICATION:

Trumpeter D.H. Sea Hornet N.F. 21
Kit No:02895
Materials: IM
Price guide: £24.99
Availability: All good model shops

BEFORE STARTING:

- Revell Contact Glue
- Ever Build Stick 2 super glue
- Zip Kicker accelerator
- Swann Morton Scalpel (10A blade)
- Tweezers
- Various clamps
- Mini drills
- Johnson's Klear (Future)

PAINTS USED:

Humbrol Enamels
33 Matt Black
164 Dark Sea Grey
11 Silver
153 Flat Red
24 Flat Yellow
72 Flat Khaki

Tamiya Acrylics
XF-21 Sky
XF-16 Flat Aluminium

REFERENCES:

- Internet





SEA HORNET

We take a look at Trumpeter's kit of this classic De Havilland fighter

BUILT AND WRITTEN BY MIKE THOMPSON

This is Trumpeter's second model of a Hornet, following as it does an RAF F1. There were many comments made when the F1 was released concerning the shape of the nose and windscreen. Unfortunately, this discrepancy is still present, the lower edge of the screen, seen in profile, should not slope upwards but should be flat continuing the line of the lower edge of the sliding portion of the canopy. This results in a wind shield that is too shallow. It has to be said that it does not spoil the overall look of the model too much and I suspect that many modellers will be prepared to


VZ

"The fit here was excellent and required the merest smear of filler along the upper joint to make it perfect"



put up with it rather than scratch build a new screen and nose section. You'll also find plenty of panel lines on the wooden wing sections that are not present on the real aircraft - again, something to either correct with filler and sandpaper, or live with. For the purpose of this short appraisal, we chose the latter…

Having got that out of the way, let's get building. Following the habit of a lifetime, I started with the fuselage and its interior. Both the pilot's cockpit and the navigator/radar operator's offices are quite nicely detailed and apart from adding a couple of extra dials and levers here and there, were built straight from the box. The seats, however, have very little in common with those fitted into the real thing; they are the wrong overall shape and have very basic shoulder straps and what look like the tea-trays found in the backs of some car seats, moulded onto them. All this raised detail was removed and the seat backs given a more rounded appearance before scratchbuilt back cushions were added.

The completed interior was then painted black which was then drybrushed with a medium grey to bring out the detail, wear and tear chipping being carried out using silver paint and a fine brush. The instrument panel decal then had the dials punched out so that they could be applied individually. Some of the knobs and levers were painted red, yellow or white and a set of Eduard seat belts, painted mid-blue with silver buckles were added to finish off this area. The small tail wheel well was painted silver and installed along with the cockpits and the fuselage halves glued together. The fit here was excellent and required the merest smear of filler along the upper joint to make it perfect.

Whilst waiting for the paint to dry on the interior, work proceeded on the flying surfaces. The tailplanes and fin/rudder all come in halves, the fit of which is superb, likewise the inner and outer wings. The only fly in the ointment here are the separate air intakes which attach to the leading edge of the inner wing; these are too deep by about



half a millimetre and result in a pronounced step above and below the wing. After some vigorous sanding down to the correct profile the panel lines around them were rescribed and the surface polished. The bulkheads located where the wings fold have some reasonable detail on them but the 'L' shaped bracket that joins them in the folded position is totally inadequate, more of this later. As an aside if the wings are to be fitted in the extended position there are no location points, it is simply a butt joint that would have very little strength so the installation of some sort of spars is a must.

With the fuselage complete, the flying surfaces were attached and the only thing to say here is that the fit is once again excellent. The engine nacelles were next, these fitted together very well as did the wheel wells which also have some nice raised detail on them. The wells were painted overall aluminium then given a wash of thin black enamel paint to give them a nice grubby look. The completed nacelles were then fitted to the wings.

Having a complete airframe in front of me, painting could begin. The cockpits and wheel wells were masked up and the undersides and vertical tail surfaces were sprayed Tamiya sky. Once dry this was masked and the upper surfaces were sprayed with Humbrol 164 Dark Sea Grey; yes I know there should be an Extra at the beginning of that colour, but I personally prefer the lighter version as it gives a less harsh, faded appearance.

Whilst the paint was fully curing, the small details could be assembled and painted. The propellers, undercarriage and main wheels posed no problems but the undercarriage doors lacked any interior detail so the reinforcing structure was formed out of plasticard and glued in place. The other minor issue was the tail wheel, this is both too small and of the wrong type. Trumpeter gives the wheel as a pneumatic type when it should be a solid anti-shimmy type like that found on the Mosquito only slightly smaller. The incorrect wheel was cut away from the leg and the yoke was opened up to accept a new wheel constructed from three circles cut from plasticard. A hole was drilled through the centre and an axle made from brass rod inserted to hold the wheel in place.

Back to the main airframe. The painted







"Following the habit of a lifetime, I started with the fuselage and its interior"

surface was given two coats of Johnsons Klear and the decals were applied. These are pretty good, but are thin enough to require careful handling. Neither option is identified on the instruction sheet but the one I chose was from 809 Squadron, whilst aboard HMS Vengeance in 1951.

Weathering of the finish was limited to the exhaust and gun muzzle staining and a few oil streaks and paint chips around the metal engine panels. The cockpit canopy frames were masked and painted, then after an overall coat of satin varnish, the pre-painted props, undercarriage and canopies were attached. This just left the folding sections of the wings, the "L" bracket was used initially but was then reinforced with some brass wine bent into place in pre-drilled holes and painted black to represent the hydraulic hoses that operate the control surfaces. This provided the much stronger joint that didn't wobble about when I walked across the room.



FINAL VERDICT

Overall, inaccuracies aside, this is a fine kit that I thoroughly enjoyed building. The fit is superb throughout and the finished model looks great.



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(replacement for 1/72 Airfix)

MSRP $13.95

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KIT BUILD

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE

SCALE 1:48

AIRFIX

SPECIFICATION:

Hawker Hurricane Mk.I
Kit No: A05127
Materials: IM
Available From: All Good Model Shops
Price Guide: £6.99

BEFORE STARTING:

- Tamiya Extra Thin Cement
- Gunze Sangyo Mr Cement S
- Tamiya Masking Tape
- Xuron Cutters
- Tweezers
- Swann Morton No.10 Scalpel & 10A Blades
- Plasti-Zap Cyanoacrylate Glue - thin and medium viscosity
- Gunze Sangyo Mr Filler Primer
- Humbrol Filler
- Mr Color Leveling Thinner
- Tamiya X-20A Thinner

PAINTS USED:

Tamiya Acrylics
XF-1 Flat Black
XF-71 Cockpit Green
XF-3 Flat Yellow
XF-8 Flat Blue
XF-7 Flat Red
XF-9 Hull Red
X-35 Semi Gloss Clear
AS-12 Bare Metal Silver
Fine Surface Primer

Gunze Sangyo Mr Hobby Acrylics
H332 Light Aircraft Grey

Alclad II
White Aluminium
Dark Aluminium
Duralumin
Airframe Aluminium

Vallejo Acrylics - colours for detailing and matt varnish

ADDITIONAL ITEMS USED

- Eduard Hurricane Mk.I (Self Adhesive) - ED49726
- Eduard Hurricane Mk.I Canopy Mask - EDEX468
- Miracle Mask for roundels

SOURCES

- Gunze Sangyo - Albion Alloys, www.albionalloys.co.uk
- Eduard - www.eduard.com
- Miracle Masks - www.freewebs.com/miraclemasks/

AFRICAN STORM



BUILT AND WRITTEN BY SPENCER POLLARD

Airfix has had a longstanding love affair with the Hurricane that dates back to almost the start of their range, kits having appeared in 1:72, 1:48 and of coarse, 1:24, the latter, an absolute classic example of the kit manufacturer's art.

Following their takeover by Hornby, this famous range has spent time replacing many of their older kits with newer tools, that combine high levels of accuracy with cutting edge details and features. Though starting slowly at first with some missteps along the way, they have really hit their stride recently with some truly excellent new kits joining the range. One of the latest in a long line of 'replacement' kits, is the Hawker Hurricane Mk.I. Airfix first released a 1:48 Hurricane kit in 1979 (kit #04102-7) to wide acclaim. Though dated today, the generally high levels of accuracy and restrained detail pleased modellers keen to add this aircraft to the limited number of fighter kits available in this scale. The kit soldiered on for the next thirty-odd years until finally surpassed by this new kit, seen for the first time in 2015.

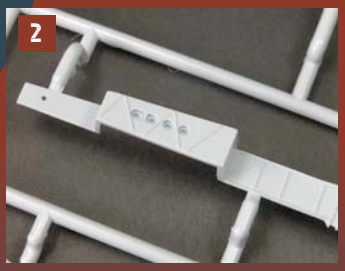
The new Airfix Hurricane is a kit for the twenty-first Century, exhibiting everything that modellers would want from a product

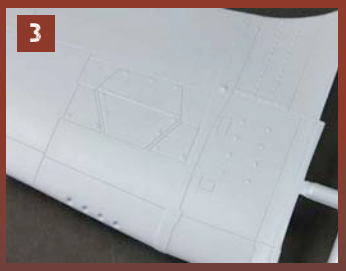
We build the excellent, Airfix 1:48 Hurricane Mk.I, choosing a different scheme to accentuate its attractive lines even further!

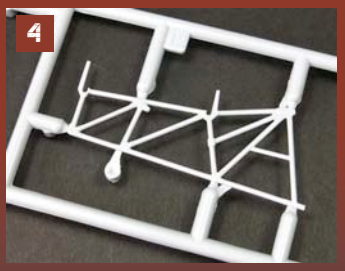
KIT BUILD

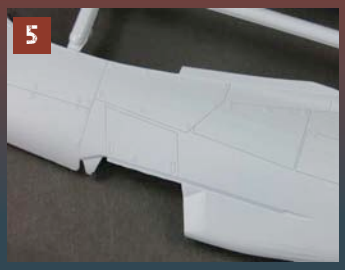
SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE





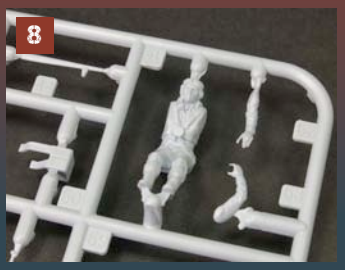


















1. From the off you will need to decide whether you want the gun bays that are included in the kit, to be shown off. Markers moulded under the wings reveal the location of the panels that need to be removed.

2. A large spar is included in the kit that forms the wall of both the wheel bay and gun bays, left and right.

3. Surface detail is utterly superb in this kit. Note that the openings from the machine guns are moulded as simple depression on the wing leading edge - drilling them out will pay dividends.

4. The cockpit is complex and complete in terms of major features. Care needs to be taken when removing some of the fine pieces from the sprue, such as the cockpit framework seen here.

5. The depiction of the panel breaks, rivets and fasteners on the fuselage sides, is top-notch.

6. Though neatly moulded, the instrument panel misses some of the finer dial details. Decals are offered in the kit to depict they dials.

7. It's great to see the inclusion of machine gun bays in this kit, the .303in machine guns being seen here.

8. Airfix has always included pilot figures in their kits, the one in the Hurricane being well sculpted, realistic and neatly detailed.

9. Two propeller and spinner options are included – Rotol and de Havilland.

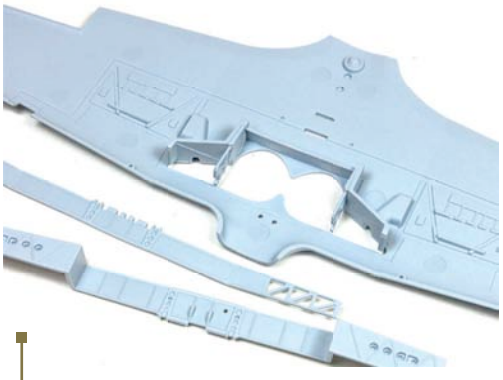
10. The open floor of the cockpit is nicely replicated, the running boards and framework for the control column being seen here.

11. Seeing some of the issues that Airfix has had with glazing made be slightly nervous about the parts supplied in the kit. I needn't have worried as they were superb. Open and closed canopies are optional extras…

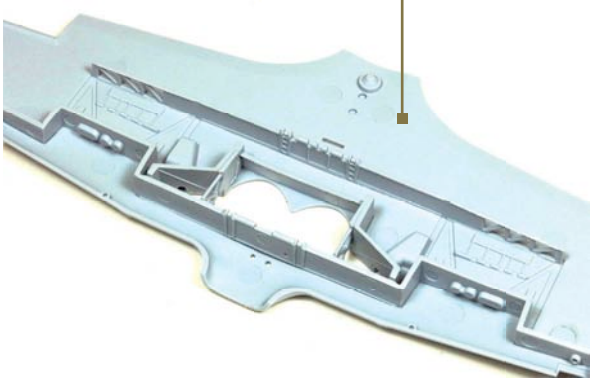
bought today. Open the well-illustrated box and you will find a highly detailed kit that features comprehensive levels of internal and external features, superb moulding and instructions and decals that will not only help you construct and paint the model, but also decorate it accurately, once you have done so.

Moulded in the now standard pale grey plastic that Airfix love so much, the kit includes a fully detailed cockpit, two gun bays that can be displayed open or closed, a comprehensively rendered undercarriage bay and canopies that can be posed open or closed. The only notable omission is the rear view mirror, but this is a small omission that does little to dampen the enthusiasm to dive in and begin construction.

Surface detail is the first thing that strikes you upon opening the box. Often the butt of some ire from modellers, the panel lines in recent Airfix kits have been reduced in depth and width, those seen here being very neatly scribed. Add to that the depiction of delicate rivets and fasteners and some of the neatest fabric we've seen for some time and you get the impression early on that this is a kit that will look very good once complete. If you've spent time building either the original Airfix kit, or some of the newer releases such as Hasegawa's neat, but overworked example, this one will please you no end, the appearance of many of the originals more distinctive features, being captured to a tee.



Assembly begins with the construction of the undercarriage bays. The use of long spars, helps set the delicate — almost neutral — dihedral of the original's distinctive wings.



All of the spars and well liners have been glued in place. Choosing not to open the gun bays, the wings could now be completed.

Digging a little deeper, we find that the cockpit is fully appointed, the space-framed construction of the original being nicely moulded. As with previous Airfix releases, the softness of the plastic and the slightly heavy sprue gates mean that care will be needed to remove the individual parts, an RB Productions razor saw being used here to reduce any chance of damage. A close look at the smaller details revealed some compromises; the instrument panel, though sharp, lacks inner dial details, decals taking care of their decoration. Though we initially planned to use the decals, the arrival of an Eduard set of pre-printed details took care of that compromise. The seat and back panel are well moulded and in the opinion of this particular scribe, in scale to the point where I felt no need to replace them with the etched parts offered by Eduard!

As mentioned earlier, the kit offers the chance to display the gun bays either open, or closed. This is a neat idea, though the need to actually remove a chunk of each upper wing to facilitate their display, may put some modellers off having them open. Should you choose to follow the instructions and open the bays, you will be rewarded with a nicely detail little feature that reveals all of the guns, internal structure and ammo feeds. It's all rather well done and certainly something that adds extra marks towards this kit's recommendation.

Design features that are included within the kit enable it to be assembled relatively easily. For instance, the spars that are used to form the basis of the gun and wheel bays also help fix the wing's dihedral, as well as adding additional strength. Building the cockpit on top of the main undercarriage bay before joining the wings to the fuselage is also welcome, allowing as it does the union of the delicate cockpit parts, without compromising their look with oversized peg and socked joints. It also allows the parts to be painted in place without holding them, the outer wing panels acting as convenient handles! Now that's a welcome feature for those hamfisted modellers such as I who can break a part by looking at it!

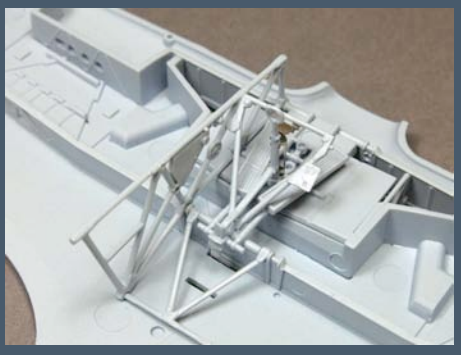
Along with the aforementioned features, the kit also offers some set-up options that elevate it above its competition. The use of separate control surfaces is a nice surprise, the inclusion of individual rudder, aileron and elevator parts adding to the candid look of the completed model. Separate flaps are not a feature though, which is understandable given their complexity and the fact that they are almost always closed on the ground…

As befits a Mk.I Hurricane and their use at the beginning of WWII — most famously during the Battle of Britain — you have the choice of two different aircraft on the decal sheet, both flown from the UK during 1940. The decals are superbly designed, beautifully printed and accurately coloured. The choices are as follows:

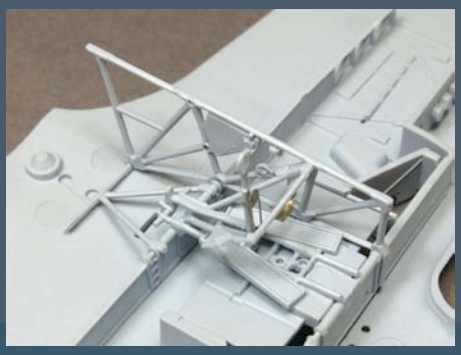
- Hawker Hurricane Mk.I, as flown by



Oddly, the cockpit is assembled and painted on top of the wings, before they are joined top the fuselage. This works well - so long as you follow the instructions to the letter!



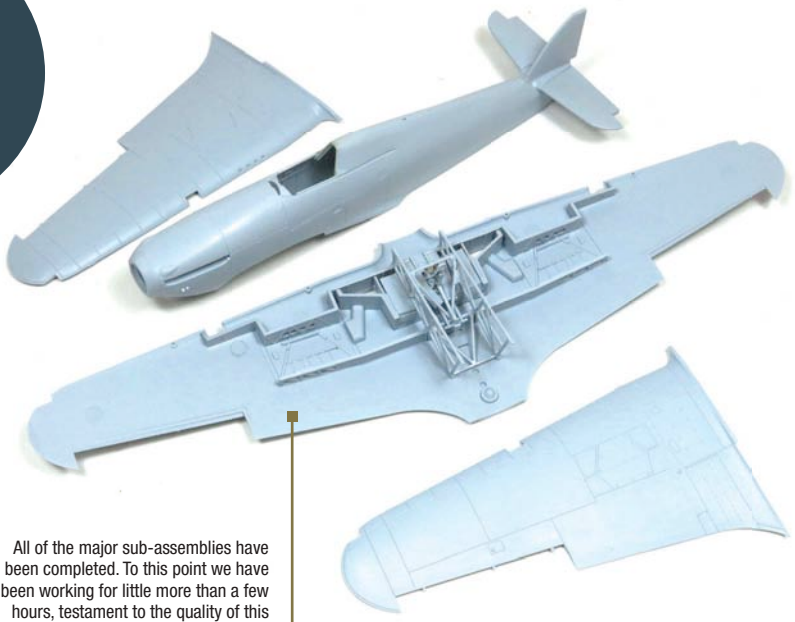
Construction continues. In order to further improve the look of the model, a set of Eduard etched-brass details were added to the cockpit.



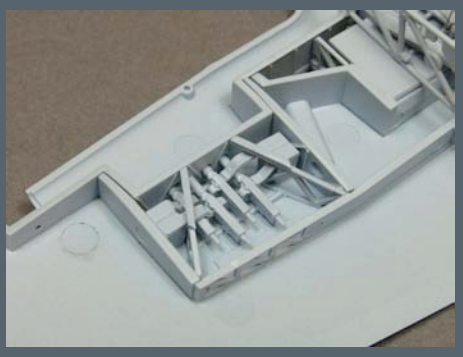
The Eduard set offers plenty of tiny features such as the chain behind the control column and the open mount for the compass under the upper cockpit brace.



Though not a Mk.1 as depicted in the kit, this Mk.XII seen at Fairford, offers plenty of details that are pertinent to our build.



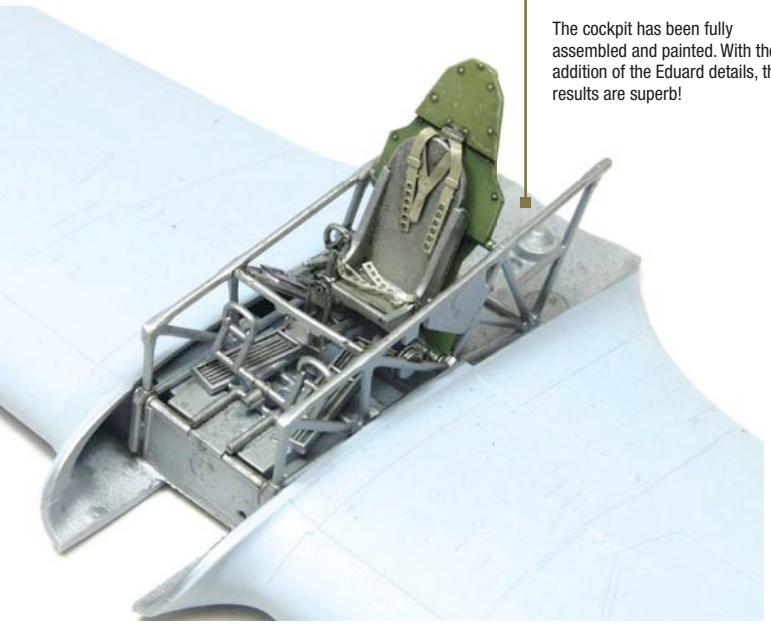
All of the major sub-assemblies have been completed. To this point we have been working for little more than a few hours, testament to the quality of this impressive kit.



In order to show you what to expect from the open gun bays, they were assembled, but not painted.



Should I build this kit again (and I might!), I'll open up the gun bays, because the detail is so nice!

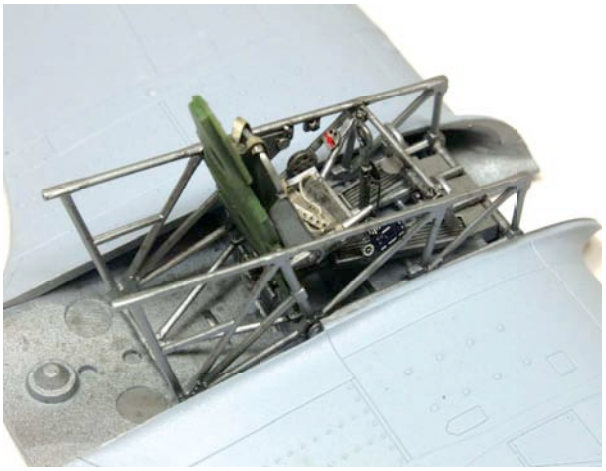


The cockpit has been fully assembled and painted. With the addition of the Eduard details, the results are superb!



The interior was sprayed with Tamiya AS-12 Bare Metal Silver and then weathered with light washes of Raw Umber oils and Humbrol Matt Black enamels.

The use of the Tamiya sprays on this kit needed care because the Airfix plastic is so soft. Normally these paints can be used without incident, but in this case I needed to prime the parts with Tamiya acrylics thinned with their alcohol-based X-20 thinners, rather than my preferred Gunze Sangyo Mr Color Thinner.





The back panel for the cockpit was painted Tamiya XF-71 Cockpit Green and then washed and drybrushed to bring out the detail. Note the look of the Eduard pre-painted seat straps and how the black washes have brought out the finer details around the cockpit.

The nose of our Mk.XII reveals a few details such as the recessed look of the fasteners, exhaust and panel lines.



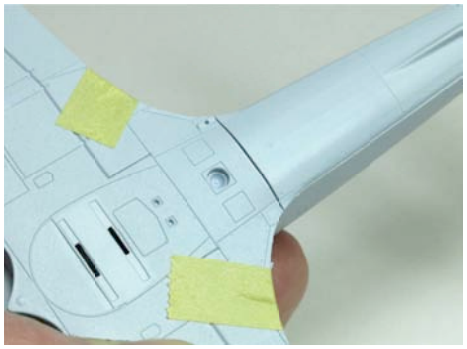
The vertical stance of the Hurricane's undercarriage is well-captured in this shot. Note their silver colour.



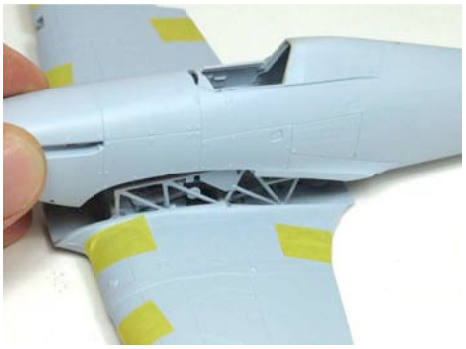
The wings have been completed and then the completed wing and fuselage sub-assemblies joined to check for fit. The fit, as can be seen here, is very good…



Tail features. Note the look of the fin's fabric covering in this shot.



A little filler was needed here and there. The gap where the underwing panel meets the lower fuselage was filled with a strip of plasticard and some superglue.



In this shot you can se how the fuselage simply drops onto the completed wings.

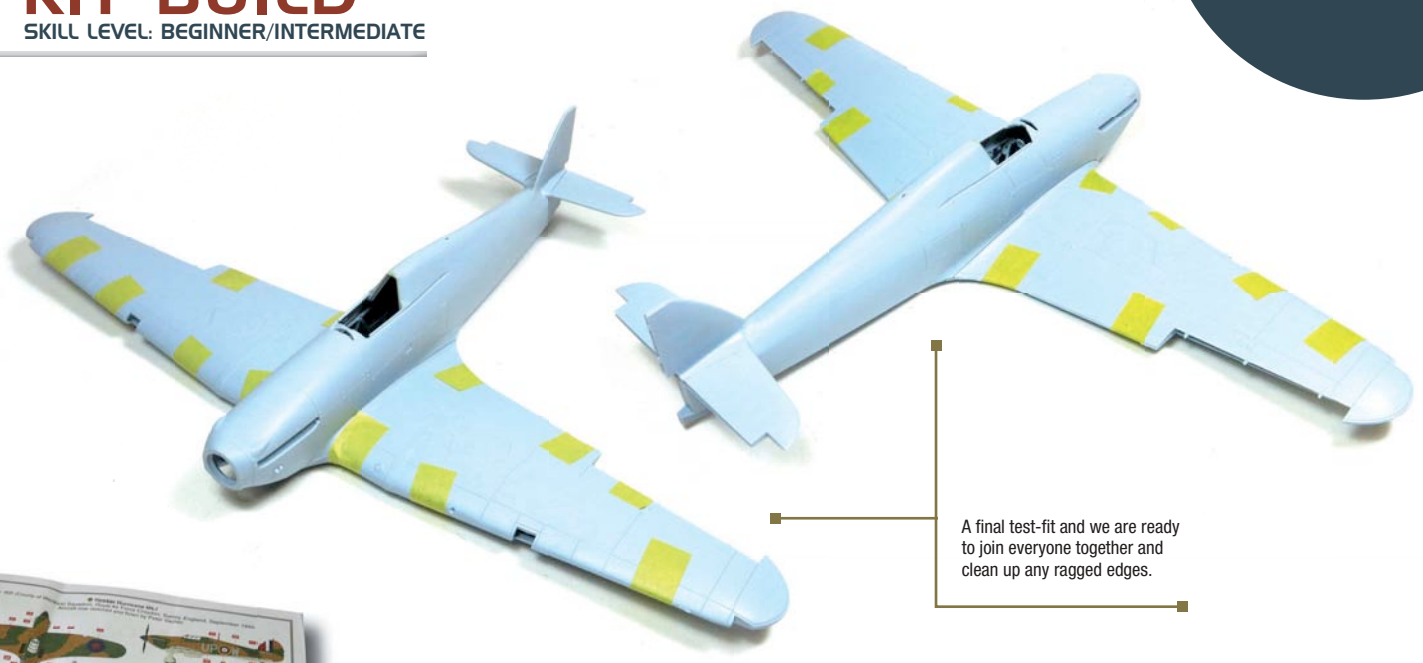
Pilot Officer William Mackenzie, No.501 Squadron, RAF Kenley, England, 7th of October 1940. This aircraft because famous after it was used to destroy a Messerschmitt Me109 by actually ramming it!

- Hawker Hurricane Mk.I, No.605 Squadron, RAF Croydon, England, September 1940. This aircraft has been restored and is now flown by Peter Vacher.

You will also notice that the kit contains a number of parts that are not designed for the Mk.I kit, parts that include items carried by the Sea Hurricane, as well as

KIT BUILD

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE



A final test-fit and we are ready to join everyone together and clean up any ragged edges.



The kit supplies decals for a 501 and 605 Squadron aircraft. I of course, had to do something a little different!



With all construction complete, the model could be primed ready for the depiction of the natural metal and doped aluminium panels. As mentioned earlier, the plastic is very soft and doesn't react well to lacquers, so the model was sprayed with several layers of Tamiya XF-19 Sky Grey thinned with X-20A Thinner. The result was a perfectly smooth surface ready for the final finish.



The fabric areas were painted with a mix comprising 50% Tamiya AS-12 Bare metal Silver - decanted into a jar and thinned with Mr Color Thinner - and 50% Gunze Sangyo H332 Light Aircraft Grey - again, thinned with Mr Color Thinner. This was applied in several thin layers and left to dry for 24 hours.



With the fabric areas dry, the natural metal was painted, first with several very thin layers of Tamiya AS-12 Bare Metal Silver and then Alclad II, individual panels being masked to allow the application of different shades - White Aluminium, Dark Aluminium, Duralumin and Airframe Aluminium.



The contrast between the fabric areas on the Hurricane and those made from metal, is easy to see in this shot.



Note the difference in sheen and tone between the metal and fabric panels in this close up of our Hurricane Mk.XII.



The markings came from the spare decal box, the wing roundels being the only exception, these being airbrushed on using Miracle masks to define the red and blue areas (the blue being Tamiya XF-8 Flat Blue, darkened with XF-1 Flat Black and the Red, Tamiya XF-7 Flat Red, darkened with XF-9 Hull Red).

the tropical filter used for this build. Though this means that there will no doubt be another kit(s), this also means that you can build other variants simply by swapping out parts and finding your own decals. This is exactly what we did, electing to build a Rhodesian Air Training Group aircraft T9531, that we believe, was flown in a natural metal and doped aluminium finish, much like that seen on RAF interwar biplanes. There is some debate about whether or not it was overall aluminium dope, but we like the contrast and as another aircraft, V6787 was definitely in the scheme seen here, we went with our first thoughts. A couple of details though are missing or not quite correct; T9531 was fitted with a camera gun, a little bulge in the wing leading edge and had the 'knuckled' type tailwheel usually associated

"If you've spent time building either the original Airfix kit, or some of the newer releases such as Hasegawa's neat, but overworked example, this one will please you no end"



With the decals and marking applied, the model was oversprayed with a very fine layer of Tamiya X-35 Semi Gloss Clear and then the panel lines defined with a wash mixed from Raw Umber oil paint mixed with Humbrol Dark Grey enamel, thinned with white spirit.



Happy with the washes, the panel lines were further defined with airbrushed layers of Tamiya X-19 Smoke, heavily thinned with Mr Color Thinner. This mix was concentrated around the nose, wing-roots and control surfaces. The model was now ready for final assembly.





Another view of the Hurricane's sturdy undercarriage. Note the look of the wheels and the fine cabling running down the inside of the undercarriage door.

For the 75th anniversary in 2015 of the Battle of Britain and with the support of the Polish Embassy G-HURI — a Mk.XIIa — was repainted in the RAF markings as P3700 a Hurricane Mk.I, coded RF-E of No 303 (Polish) Squadron. The results, as can be seen, are utterly gorgeous!





with Mk IIs. Also, the panel on the starboard side under the cockpit has been painted metal on my model, whereas it should be doped fabric - something I will change at a later date. I would like to thank Troy Smith from Britmodeller, who pointed these details out to me. Much appreciated!

A final point that might be worth making, concerns the plastic that Airfix use to mould their kits. Though the kit is well moulded and crisp, the plastic used is very soft and so needs care to both assemble and paint. I normally use Mr Color Thinner and Gunze Sangyo paints to create crisp, sharp paint jobs, but found that using these materials on this kit damaged the surface of the plastic, much like cellulose used to in the past. Experimentation revealed that the use of Tamiya paints thinned with their alcohol-based X-20A Thinner had no such effects and so I would recommend using those less 'hot' paints rather than trying to use lacquers, should they be your normal choice. This may also effect your use of Alclad; make sure you prime the model properly before applying this lacquer-based material and you should be okay. If in doubt, experiment - I would hate for you to damage your model with the use of a material that's incompatible with the plastic.

FINAL VERDICT

This is a very fine kit from Airfix that all but closes the book on this aircraft, in this scale. The quality of the plastic, the levels of detail and the clever way the kit has been broken down, all add up to a fun project that results in a very fine replica of this pugnacious fighter. We really like this kit and feel that you will too; there's enough variation when it comes to colour schemes and thanks to the inclusion of those Sea Hurricane parts, we will no doubt be taking another another look at the Airfix Hurricane in due course.
Very highly recommended.

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KIT BUILD

SKILL LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED

SCALE 1:32

SWS SUPER WING SERIES ZOUKEI-MURA

SPECIFICATION:

Zoukeimura 1/32 Ta152 H-0
Kit No. SWSII
Materials: IM/vinyl masks
Availability: www.zoukeimura.co.jp/en/
for Europe RB Productions http://www.radubstore.com

BEFORE STARTING:

- Super Glue
- MEK
- Gator Glue
- Tamiya fine surface primer
- Alcohol
- Cellulose thinners
- Mr Mark Setter

PAINTS USED

Tamiya Acrylics
X-19 Smoke
XF-3 Yellow
XF-7 Red
XF-19 Grey
Gaia clear gloss
Vallejo acrylic matt varnish
Vallejo Acrylics
Bare Metal Foil
AK Interactive
AK2071 Paneliner for brown and grey camouflage
AK2019 Aircraft Engine Oil
AK2033 Aircraft Engine Wash
Mr Surfacer 500 Black

SOURCES:

Zoukeimura http://www.zoukeimura.co.jp/en/
for Europe RB Productions http://www.radubstore.com
Gunze Sangyo products - http://www.albionalloys.co.uk
AK Interactive - http://ak-interactive.com/v2

REFERENCES

- Valiant wings Publishing Airframe and miniature No3 FW190D and TA152 Richard Franks ISBN 978-0-9567198-2-9
- Aero Detail 2 Model Graphix / Dainippon Kaiga Focke-Wulf Fw 190D
- ASIN: B0027M8LFA



TA-152 H

History

Focke-Wulf's Ta 152H was a high-altitude fighter interceptor, designed by Kurt Tank and produced near the end of the war. The '152 being a development of the infamous and successful FW190, you can clearly see the family resemblance. The original intention was to make three distinct versions of the Ta152 based upon different engines and wings. The H variant (Höhenjäger 'high-altitude fighter'), the C (intended for medium-altitude and ground attack with a different engine and smaller wing), and the E (fighter-recon, borrowing the engine of the H model and the wing of the C).

Initial deployment of the H into Luftwaffe service began in January 1945. A grand total of 220 units has been quoted incorrectly when in fact only some 43 aircraft were built — including prototypes — before the end of the war in Europe. A fraction of this total, being



0

BUILT AND WRITTEN BY JOHN "TIGGER" WILKES

We build Zoukei Mura's latest 1:32 Kit, their impressive and well engineered Ta152 H-0, mixing up some colours and applying some aftermarket decals to create an unusual scheme along the way.

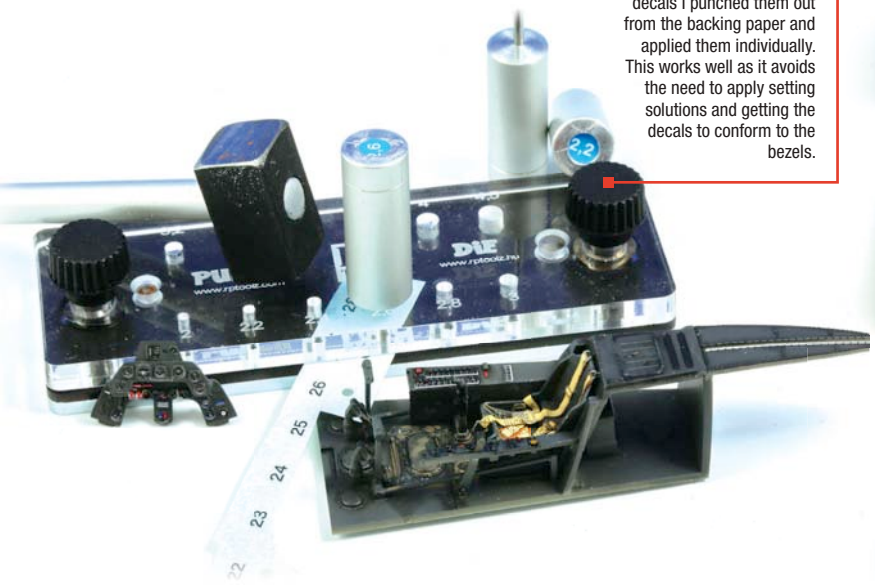
the HO variant with just 20 or so airframes. In reality, they were too little too late to make any significant impact upon the final outcome of the conflict.

Our Ta152H-0 (W.Nr.150168) from JG-301 was flown by Kommodore Maj. Fritz Auffhammer who had been evaluating the aircraft before taking the airframe back to the factory. He was concerned about the flak gunners not recognising the aircraft and opening fire on him, so he had the whole airframe painted in a scheme of RLM23 or similar. He flew her from Stendhal to Rechlinu for consultation with service technicians at Focke-Wulf. Accompanying him on the flight was Hptm. Roderich Cescotti in Fw-190 D-9 "Green 1". There are some uncertainties as to the colour used and also some speculation if this was in fact red! EagleCals quote FS21310, which is good enough for us!

- Length: 10.82 m (35 ft 5 63/64 in)

KIT BUILD

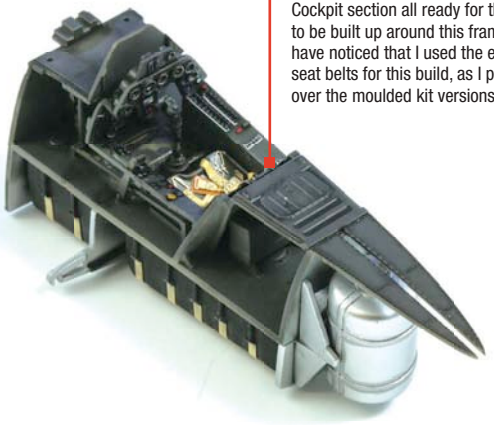
SKILL LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED



In order to get the best fitment of the instrument decals I punched them out from the backing paper and applied them individually. This works well as it avoids the need to apply setting solutions and getting the decals to conform to the bezels.



Two large fuel tanks and a nitrous oxide tank are added to the cockpit construction and although the fuel tanks will not be seen again, the nitrous one will, so it's best to paint them both.



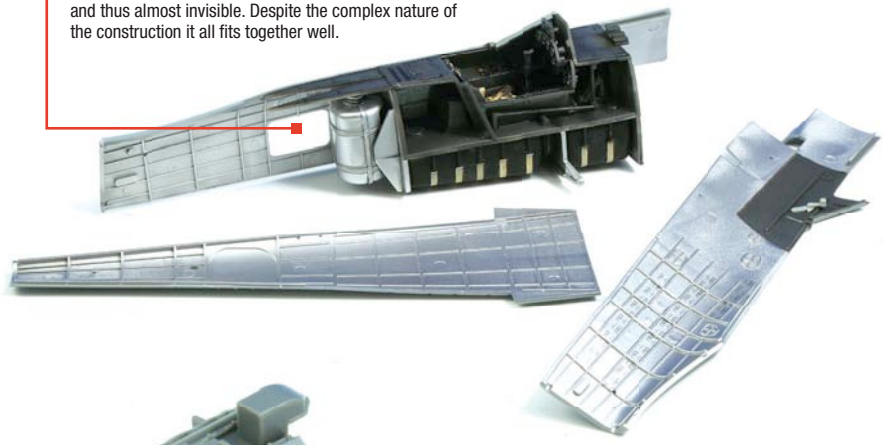
Cockpit section all ready for the fuselage to be built up around this frame. You may have noticed that I used the excellent HGW seat belts for this build, as I prefer them over the moulded kit versions.

- Wingspan: 14.44 m (47 ft 4 1/2 in)
- Height: 3.36 m (13 ft 1in)
- Armament: 1 × 30 mm MK 108 cannon 85 rounds. 2 × 20 mm MG 151/20 cannons 350 rounds
- Power plant: Jumo 213 E engine, giving the Ta 152H speeds up to 755 km/h (472 mph) at 13,500 m (41,000 ft, using the GM-1 nitrous oxide boost) and 560 km/h (350 mph) at sea level (using the MW 50 methanol-water boost).

In Miniature

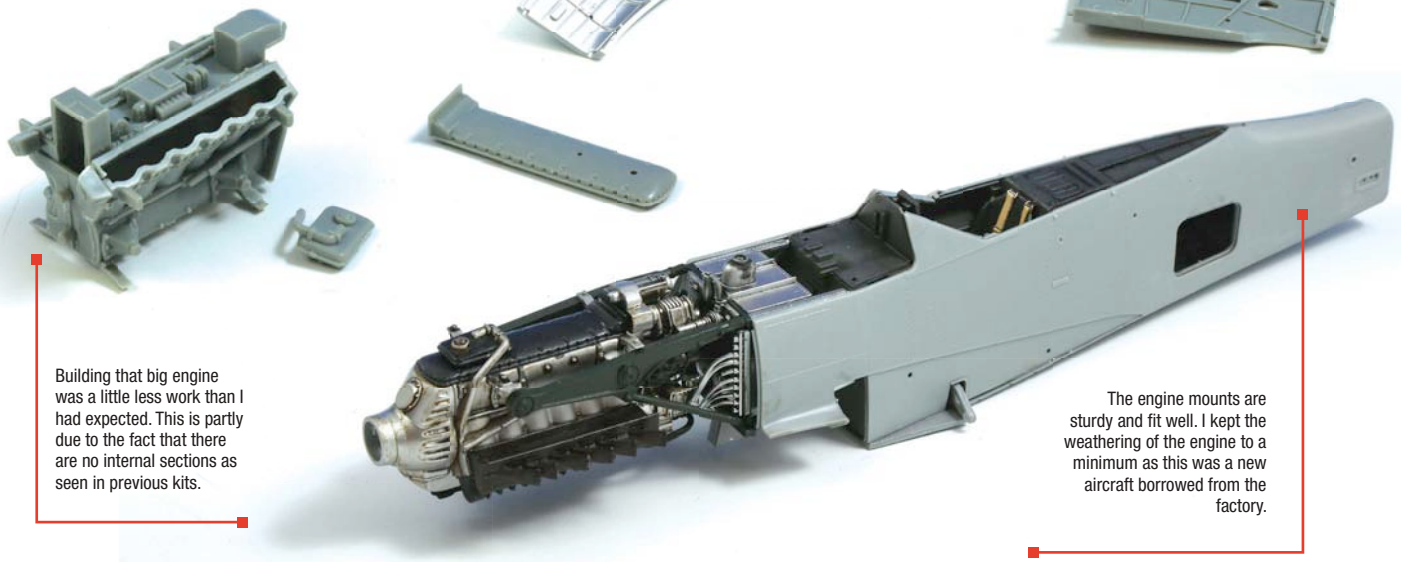
For modellers wanting to be able to build a Ta152 in 1:32 we have been able to use the commendable but often awkward Pacific Coast models

The way in which the fuselage builds is strange, but what it does do it to make all of the joints are along panel lines and thus almost invisible. Despite the complex nature of the construction it all fits together well.



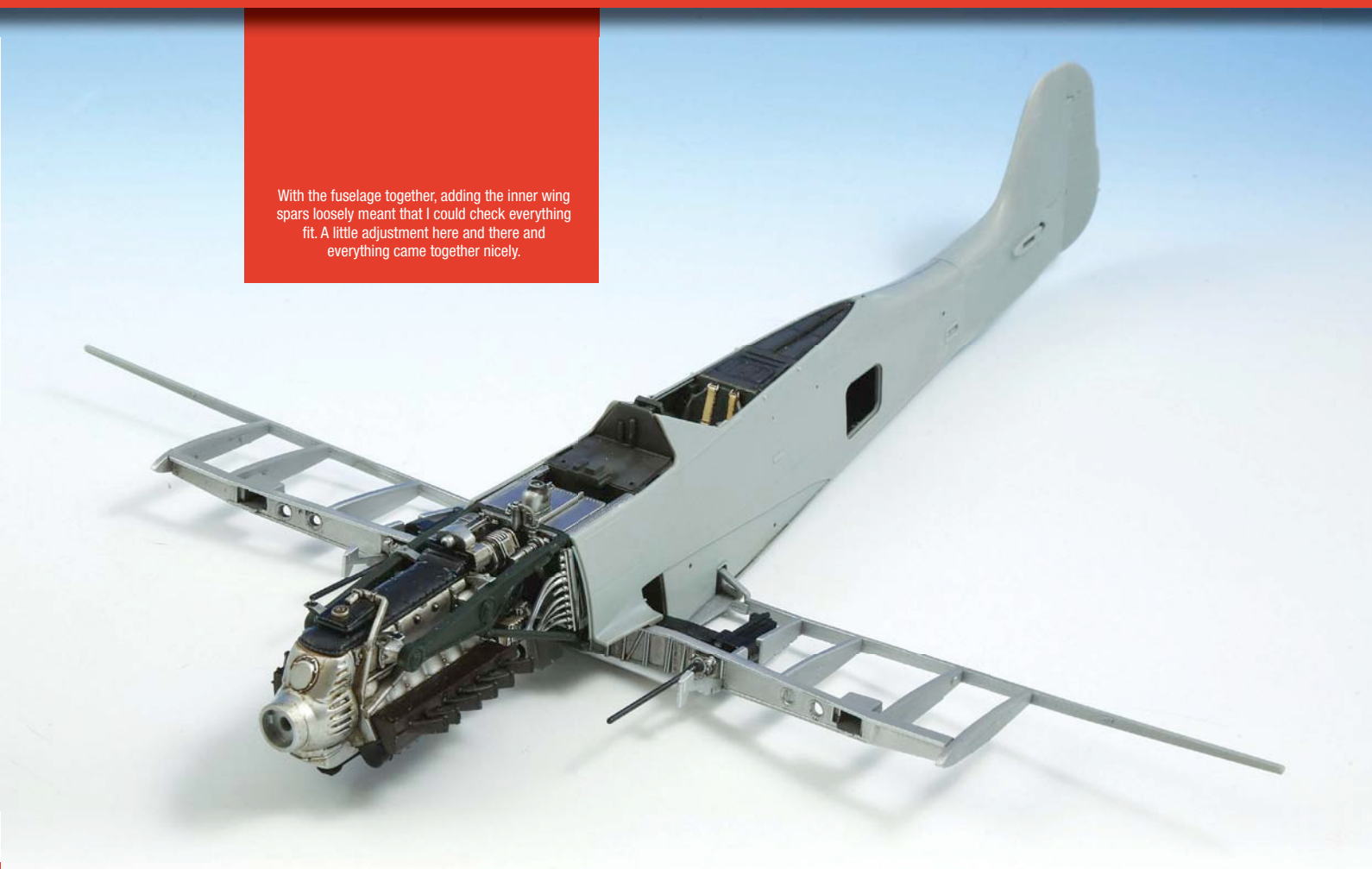
An extended tail section houses several bottles. Other than fixing the mount for the tailwheel in place, the remaining detail was omitted, none of it being seen with the access door closed.





Building that big engine was a little less work than I had expected. This is partly due to the fact that there are no internal sections as seen in previous kits.

The engine mounts are sturdy and fit well. I kept the weathering of the engine to a minimum as this was a new aircraft borrowed from the factory.



With the fuselage together, adding the inner wing spars loosely meant that I could check everything fit. A little adjustment here and there and everything came together nicely.

kit . This has become a bit of a rarity, despite being just a few years old. That kit had some faults and issues which could be sorted out but needed some work. Otherwise you could choose to take a Hasegawa FW-190D9 and add a resin conversion from Rutman, or indeed make the Rutman full kit. Zoukei-Mura offers two kits: the H-1 and the slightly different H-0 versions as individual kits and as such, are the best of the 1:32 scale kits.

As we have come to expect this kit is contained within a large top-opening box with a reasonable artwork of the subject. Having built the Skyraider from this company, I was not in any way surprised at the contents of this model with lots of clever engineering and some complicated breakdowns of parts to allow other versions to be made. This model is essentially the same as the TA152 H-1. Instructions are the same with an addendum sheet for the H-0 version. A pretty complete kit is on offer with 8 sprues carrying a total of 174 grey parts and 6 clear. A set of cut, vinyl masks are included, as too are a set of decals specific to the H-0 version with three schemes to choose from.

Examining the contents will reveal that the surface detail has a good level of panel detail and all of the shapes look accurate and realistic. There are couple of small subtle differences from the H-1 kit and these are all pointed out within the supplementary instruction sheet; to be honest, I cannot see any changes other than that there is an upper cowl nose ring vent which is different.This is shown in the instructions so nothing should catch you out here then.

ZM has made their kit instructions like a manual and this is a nice touch with plenty of information that needs to be read and read again to ensure you don't miss something. Paints are called out as RLM colours and referenced to Vallejo paints, as well as Mr Color where there is a match.

The instrument panel comes in a choice of clear or solid plastic and there is a decal for the instruments to go over this. Two seats are provided, one with a seat belt harness moulded on and one without. Colour schemes are a little limited and here there is a choice of 'Green 4' in the RLM 81,82 and 83 over 76 undersides, 'Yellow 1' or 'White 7' in RLM 82 and 83 over 76 undersides. No information is offered on the unit or dates of these markings. I found the decals to be a little on the thick side and they needed lots of setting solutions to get them to settle down, although their colour and density are good.

Cockpit

One word of caution when building such a well-engineered kit: read the instructions several times to make sure that you know



Skins on the wings fit well, although the leading edges were another story needing some heavy clamping to get them all lined up. Some Mr Surfacer 500 black was used to fill any small gaps.

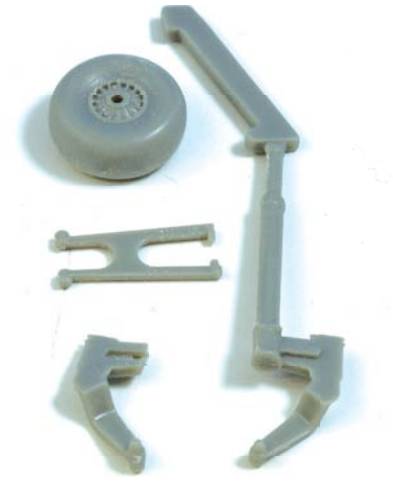


Wings on and the top forward cowl needs to be attached. I was a little concerned but needn't have been because this part just dropped perfectly into place. I think that this may have been due to the careful alignment up to this point.



Breakdown of the elevators is logical and there are some clever joints which will mean that once assembled, it should all line up without fuss.

where parts go and how they interact with others, later on. Wherever there is an uncertainty over positioning, there always seems to be another drawing somewhere that shows you the correct location, so it is worth checking before applying parts. Zoukei-Mura start with the well-appointed cockpit and within a matter of a few minutes I had an assembled office with a set of rudder pedals and also a moveable throttle! Everything seems to have a positive locating tab which makes things easier to ensure alignment. Once painted, I dressed the parts with the supplied decals and the results were very impressive. I took the liberty of lightening the suggested colour, as once in the fuselage it will be very dark. I ran some Tamiya Black Panel Wash around the details and this added some nice shadows.



Components of the rear wheel and strut. Once assembled, this slotted into the fin and attached to the previously installed bulkhead. It was not the simplest of joints to glue especially the drag yoke.



Clever design has meant that the main gear is assembled then slotted into the gear bay, you then push the assembly outboards until it will go no further then twist and it all locks tightly into position.



First look at the model on her legs and she is beginning to look every inch a Ta152. There is a distinctive stance to these aircraft and ZM has captured it well.



As a primer I used Tamiya XF-19 which covers the Mr Surfacer 500 black with a single coat. I sprayed the model in sections in order to be able to handle it throughout.



First round of red which was mixed from Tamiya XF-7 Red and XF-3 Yellow. I added some Gaia clear to impart a nice glossy sheen. I almost used the Mr Color paint but in the end went with my own mixture.



After the decals were applied and sealed I gave the model a wash with AK Interactive Panel Liner which was fairly subdued. I removed most of it to keep it nice and translucent so as to not look stark.



With most of the panel wash removed, the appearance is much better and in-keeping with the story of the aircraft. There were a few patches where the wash has been totally removed this was simply a case of re applying and repeating the process until satisfied.

As mentioned, choice of seats is provided and here I went with the one without belts (the other is fully appointed with a set of belts and buckles), my preference being to add the superb HGW set which is designed for this kit, as it really does look amazing. If you have not used one of these sets I would thoroughly recommend them and use a PVA style glue to attach them in position.

One of the things that is a nice touch in the instructions is that parts are named as well as numbered, so you can understand what things are. First reference to the HO specific instruction sheet is called for with the instrument panel; although it is the same as the H1 version there is an option to use the clear replacement, or a solid plastic part. I went with the solid part and have stashed the clear part in my Pacific coast kit! Over this I simply added the individual decals for the dials and voilà - all done! A drop of clear gloss finishes off the panel.

Moving along, you will soon be adding the large nitrous-oxide tank and its bracket behind the rear bulkhead. I thought this would never really be seen, but having the side fuselage door open, it will. The top rear canopy panel has a gap for the canopy track which does allow it to be seen as well. Just as well that I painted it then! Attached to the bottom of the cockpit section are two large fuel tanks, again I painted them just in case they would be visible on the finished model, which they weren't! A vertical bulkhead is set between the tanks and there is a guide at the bottom of the page 8 which clearly shows its placement. I liked the way that ZM has given you some photographs of the completed sub sections at the end of each build phase and this helps to avoid confusion.

Engine

When I built the Skyraider kit I moaned about the fact that there were pistons and cylinders that were just a little unnecessary. I have to say that this kit does not have such gimmicks and this makes the engine a nice simple construction and a very good replica of the Jumo 213 E engine. The breakdown is logical with separate crank case and cylinder heads making painting a simple task. Once again, the callouts of each part being named makes understanding the engine a useful exercise. A whole raft of accessories is attached to the side and rear of the engine along with the supercharger housing. A nice touch is the addition of the spark plug leads that fit the cylinder heads perfectly. There is an odd open cut-out area below each of the exhaust parts and although this will not be seen, I found that their placement was a little hit and miss. Once again, reference to the photographs within the instructions will pay dividends. The bottom cowl guide was a loose fit and I knocked it off several times before the engine was mounted. A pair of beefy engine bearers join to the engine along with several more accessories before the attachment of the MK108 Machine gun, which would fire through the middle of the engine and through the centre of the propeller. Most of this will never be seen but at least you know it is there, it all adds strength to the assembly. Some light oily weathering was applied from the AK Interactive range in the form of AK2019 Aircraft Engine Oil.

Fuselage

About now I was preparing the mid fuselage with several sections which needed some painting and detailing on the insides. One such part is the right fuselage number D1 as this will be seen if the rear fuselage side door is opened as I have done. I added MDC 32-009 Duralumin manufacturer's stamps, which is a decal sheet designed to be applied to late war unpainted metal structures. Once painted and decals applied, the fuselage can be sealed up. I found that the rear shelf of the cockpit was a tight fit but this just needed careful alignment. The most complicated part was the bottom lower fuselage plate, which just needed a little manipulation to get into position before the application of some superglue. So far all of the joints had been on panel lines. Up next, was the long tail, there are several internal parts which comprise the oxygen cylinders and the



Vallejo Acrylic Matt Varnish is sprayed all over the model, this makes a sudden and dramatic difference to the appearance of the model. Care needs to be exercised with this varnish as it has a tendency of having lumps in the bottle so pouring it through a tea strainer works for me.

compressed air tanks. These would not be seen on my completed model as I chose to close the access door on the left side fin, so I left them out although I did add the vertical bulkhead because this would support the tail wheel and also help the fin in alignment. Adding the rudder is a simple drop in fit and there is a chance to have it offset if desired. Bringing the two sub-assemblies together is simple enough, but some care will need to be exercised in order to make sure they align correctly before applying some glue to the joint and leaving it to set.

Wings

Construction begins with a spar and set of ribs which forms the backbone of the wings, to this are added a pair of MG151 machine guns and their ammo boxes. One of the additional bonuses of this structure is that it will aid in the dihedral as it is incorporated into the span-wise spar. ZM mould some nice open barrels for the machine guns and they were easier to fit after the skin of the wings had been applied. Several parts make up the outer skinning of the wing and herein lay probably the biggest issue with the kit: the leading edge parts. I found them to be very tight fitting and so reverted to some heavy clamping to get them to line up with the previously attached skins. Ailerons are positionable and so are the flaps, which are designed to be in the dropped position. With some careful trimming of the tab you could have them retracted, which is explained clearly in the instructions.

With an assembled wing and fuselage, it is at this stage that I bought them together. There are a pair of fillets which fit on the side of the fuselage, but for some stupid reason I chose to not add them when the instructions said to. This made their fit very difficult and I actually thought I would have to remove the wing to get them into position. Some careful twisting and pressure got them in - but I wouldn't recommend that! In the end, the joints were pretty much on panel lines and needed no filler at all. In fact, the only place I needed any was the junction between the centre bottom plate, which covers the opening of the wheel bays and the lower rear fuselage plate. I cured this with Mr Surfacer 500 built up in a couple of layers then rubbed smooth with some alcohol. With the engine just dropping into place and fitting well, all that remained was to add the engine covers, I deliberately left the left side one off to show the engine, all of the other panels fitting with some gentle persuasion.

As I got to page 22 in the instructions I spotted a note that I had made about the different parts required for the H0 version and referred to the addendum sheet in order to get the right replacement part D-14. A choice of open or closed cowl flaps is provided and I went with the open, as aesthetically I liked it better than the closed. Finally, adding the elevators to the tail resulted in a very tight and clean fit needing no alterations or corrections at all.

Undercarriage

Starting with the tail wheel assembly I found that it all fitted as advertised, there being no issues, although there is no option to offset it if you wanted to without some surgery. Onto the main gear and I was a little worried about the method of fitting it. In the end it was actually a very easy job, I just needed to look at the instructions and make sure I followed it to the letter. The actual gear is very good and I found that everything cleaned up without any real issues. When the gear is ready it slots into the gear bay then cleverly moves outwards. There is a diagram which shows how it should look. I left the gear doors off until final assembly as I suspected they would get knocked off otherwise. The large paddle propellor fits over a hub and has a large spinner over it. This then simply slots onto the shaft although it was quite tight.

Canopy

ZM must be congratulated as this has to be probably the clearest plastic canopy I have ever used. Included in the kit is a vinyl set of masks and they did a great job of protecting the clear parts during construction and painting. Some caution is needed with the rear canopy section, there are some large hooks which stick out of the bottom and these latch onto the protrusions on the fuselage. They are delicate and I broke them at least twice in one case I had to make a new one as the original disappeared! Under the windscreen sits the instrument cover and through this, sticks a gun sight. This was something that was a little of a weak point in the whole model as there is a mould line down the middle which needed removing before installation.

Painting

This scheme was probably one of the easiest in concept, but one of the most challenging in execution. Firstly the colour is partially factual and partly speculative so there is no definitive colour. Secondly the large areas of single colour do not lend them self well to being unweathered, as they tend to look quite bland. After several references were consulted I chose to mix my own colours from Tamiya paints until I was happy with the shade. I deviated from the suggested FS number and made my mixture close to the RLM23 which I suspect may be more appropriate. Using

the kit supplied vinyl mask I found they fitted very precisely, despite a little lifting on the corners they did a good job. Typical of Tamiya paints they thinned with cellulose thinners and sprayed superbly. I added some Gaia gloss to impart a tough finish and this aids the drying time to under an hour. Once the model had been painted I applied another coat of the Gaia clear in preparation of the decals.

Decals

This has to be one of the quickest models I have decalled because of the amount used. Markings came from an EagleCals 32-132 sheet which the editor asked me to use specifically this scheme. In essence, they worked flawlessly and as expected. Density and printing is of the very highest standard and with a little setting solution they all settled down well. The fin swastikas are made from two parts and as long as enough time is left between each part then they worked. There are three other aircraft on the sheet along with full stencilling so the package is pretty complete. A nice touch is that there are decals for the undercarriage engine and propeller too.

Weathering

Minimal weathering was applied to this model as she probably didn't fly more than a few times in this scheme. I applied some of the AK Interactive panel wash for brown aircraft and this worked well. Although I have never really been a fan of brown washes, the results looked just right in this case. This wash was applied in the normal manor over a gloss surface into all of the panel lines and rivets. Once left for an hour or so the excess was rubbed away with some kitchen towel. A very light dusting of Tamiya X-2 white and X-22 clear all over the model gave a scale effect and bought the contrast of the decals down a little. If there were any spots of panel lines that were not deep enough then after a coat of Vallejo Matt Varnish I ran a pencil over the spot. I also did the same for any missing rivets, after another light dusting of the same Matt varnish it was all sealed. Final oil streaks were kept to a minimum using Tensocrom Oil.

Finishing Off...

Attaching the final parts such as the extendable ladder and aerials was a breeze. I added the wire aerial from the fin to the canopy with some black fine EZ-Line. I could find no evidence either photographic or written to show the aerial taught, as so many modellers make it. I went with the areal hanging down loosely this was held in place with Gator Glue thinned with water and applied with a fine brush. I added Bare Metal Foil to the gear leg oleos and a wash of Tamiya X-19 Smoke to the ends of each. One final dusting coat of Vallejo Matt Varnish finished this model off.

I spent some time painting a figure to go with the model and I chose the dynamically posed figure from Wings Cockpit Figures. This figure adds a sense of excitement to the finished piece. For the record he is LUFT 06A 'Helmut Wick' although he could be anyone. I just liked the pose!



FINAL VERDICT

This really was a pleasant kit to build despite the strong emphasis upon high end engineering and giving the modeller as much as possible. There were some frustrating areas of construction like the wing leading edges. I understand the reasons for this method of construction. Having built the Skyraider from the same stable I can honestly say that this was a better experience and built surprisingly swiftly with little fuss. I would warn that you will need to make sure that things are aligned precisely at the early stages otherwise it won't all fit later on, as the tolerances are very small. There is plenty of detail in the kit to be a show stopper from the box, with some small additions it could easily be taken to a new level of almost super detailed with just some wire and plastic card. At the time of writing RB Productions has just released an etched brass cockpit which would elevate an already superb office. I only used the seat belts from HGW and these made a big difference to the appearance of the dark cockpit. I have little hesitation in recommending this kit to those who have several builds behind them and want a very well-engineered kit which needs little in the way of aftermarket.

EXTENDED KWIK BUILD

KWIK BUILD

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

SCALE 1:48

TRUMPETER

SPECIFICATION:

PLA JL-9 Plateau Eagle
Kit No: 02879
Materials: IM/PE
Price guide: £27.99
Availability: All good model shops

BEFORE STARTING:

- Tamiya Extra Thin Cement
- Gunze Sangyo Mr Cement S
- Tamiya Masking Tape
- Xuron Cutters
- Tweezers
- Swann Morton No.10 Scalpel & 10A Blades
- Plasti-Zap Cyanoacrylate Glue - thin and medium viscosity

PAINTS USED:

Gunze Sangyo Mr Hobby Acrylics

H67 RLM 65
H322 Phthalo Cyanine Blue
H331 Dark Sea Grey
H308 Light Gray
H442 Light Green

Tamiya Acrylics

XF-1 Flat Black
X-22 Clear
X-19 Smoke

SOURCES:

- Trumpeter - info@pocketbond.co.uk; Website: www.pocketbond.co.uk
- Gunze Sangyo - Albion Alloys, www.albionalloys.co.uk

REFERENCES:

- Internet searches, Wikipedia



BUILT AND WRITTEN BY SPENCER POLLARD

PLATEAU

We build perhaps the ultimate conversion of the famous MiG-21 family, th

The Guizhou JL-9, also known as the FTC-2000 Mountain Eagle (Shanying), is a two-seat fighter-trainer developed by the Guizhou Aviation Industry Import/Export Company (GAIEC) for the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) and the People's Liberation Army Naval Air Force (PLANAF).

Trumpeter has taken the rather unsurprising decision to model this new training aircraft and in so doing, has created a rather impressive kit detailed parts both for the airframe and the weapons that this attack trainer carries

EAGLE

he attractive and streamlined, JL-9 supersonic trainer



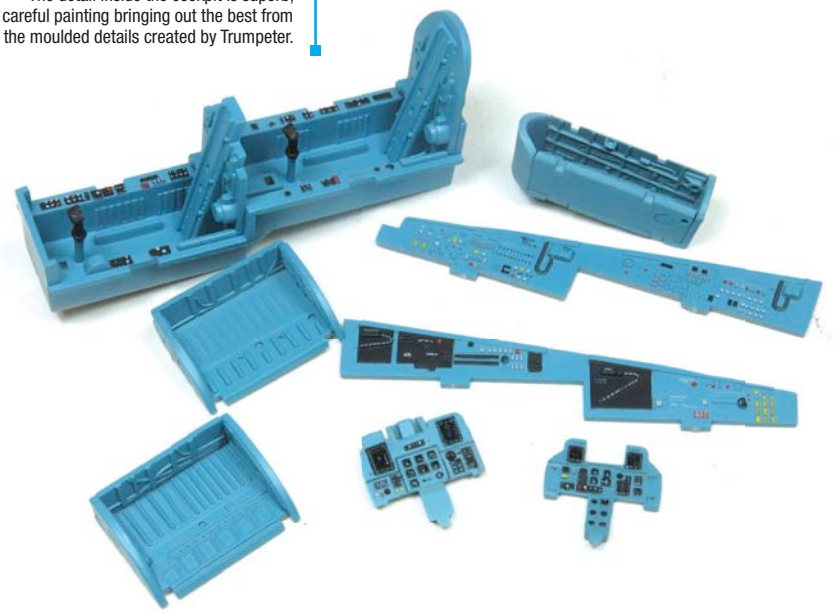
in service.

Construction begins with the cockpit. Levels of detail here are simply extraordinary, fully detailed panels, tub and ejector seats combining to create a level of intricacy that's the match of anything from the aftermarket. Add a few etched everything you need from the box - just don't bother with the decals for the instruments, their colour and design leaving much to be desired…

The cockpit for the review sample was built from the box and then painted in a rather fetching blue colour mixed from Gunze Sangyo Mr Hobby H67 RLM 65, darkened with H322 Phthalo Cyanine Blue, the result being a really attractive colour that was also used in the wheel bays and around the undercarriage legs and door interiors. Once dry, details were

KWIK BUILD

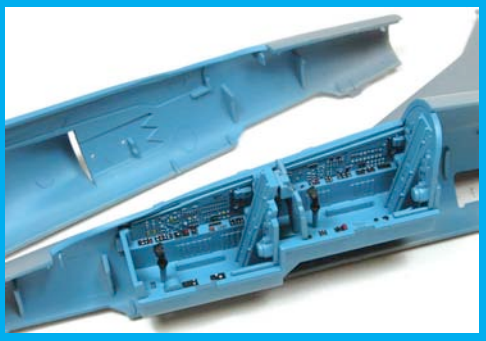
SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER



The detail inside the cockpit is superb, careful painting bringing out the best from the moulded details created by Trumpeter.



The inside of the wheel bays is also painted in pale blue. We are not sure of the accuracy of this colour, but is sure looks amazing against the pale grey camouflage!



The cockpit assembles neatly and fits well within the fuselage. Large tabs and slots ensure it is secured firmly in place.

picked out with vallejo acrylics, the time spent to paint the smaller features being preferable to applying those rather unpleasant decals.

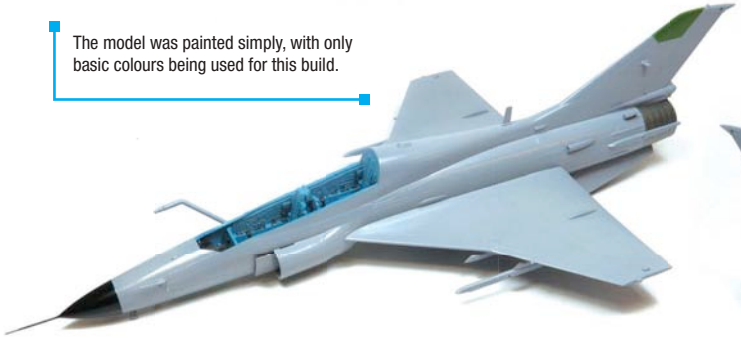
The seats were assembled from the box and once again painted with Gunze Mr Color, this time H331 Dark Sea Grey. Vallejo colours were used to add details before adding some prepainted seat straps from my spares' box, those seen here being from a redundant Eduard Super Tucano set, the same set allowing some data placards to be added to both the seats, and cockpit interior.

The airframe is decorated with rivets and fine panel lines and this makes it a pleasure to examine, the results being the match of anything seen elsewhere. The breakdown of the kit is such that everything should come together very quickly, little more than a dozen parts being used top complete the airframe ready for painting; in this day and age of highly complex kits, that's something too be applauded! Fit is superb too, no more than a brush loaded with Tamiya Extra Thin Cement, being needed to join the parts. A quick once-over with a sanding stick and the model was ready to be painted.

The kit contains decals for two different aircraft, one painted in pale grey, the other in white. A small, but well-printed decal sheet takes care of the main marking and stencils that adorn both the aircraft and weapons. Though I liked the white aircraft, the grey aircraft was chosen so that a little weathering could be incorporated into the finish. Given that we were rather limited with regard to time, the model was simply sprayed with several layers of Gunze Mr Color H308 Light Gray, masked, then the nose cone and green dielectric panel on the fin top airbrushed in Tamiya XF-1 Flat Black and Gunze Sangyo H442 Light Green respectively, before spraying everything with several layers of Tamiya X-22 Clear in preparation for the decals. And that was that - quick and easy!

The simplicity of the colour scheme is matched by the paucity of the markings - it's about as easy as it gets! A word of caution though: the decals in this kit are very thin and so must be handled with extreme care. The pay-off to this is that they settle down beautifully, even without setting solutions, but you must take it easy when applying them! Once in place and dry, the model was sprayed with several thin coats of Vallejo Flat Varnish.

In keeping with my old school approach to this build, no washes were used in the panel lines, the details being accentuated here



The model was painted simply, with only basic colours being used for this build.



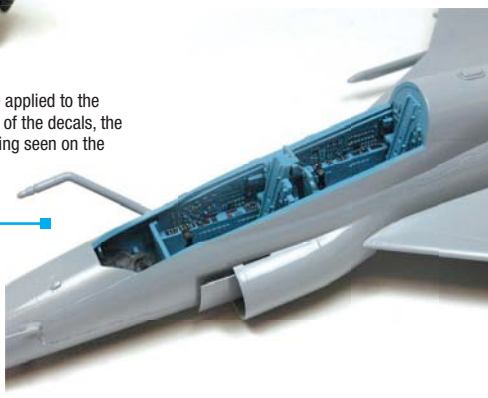
The camouflage was painted entirely with Gunze Sangyo acrylics thinned with Mr Color Thinner. The model looks really sharp at this point - even without any extra layers of weathering.



The jet pipe was painted with Tamiya Bare Metal Silver darkened with a few drops of Gloss Black.

Underside view reveals the blue wheel bays. Note those huge underfuselage fins.

Several layers of X-22 Clear were applied to the model to facilitate the application of the decals, the sheen possible from this paint being seen on the upper edge of the intake.



and there with layers of Tamiya X-19 Smoke, thinned with Mr Color Thinner. This was applied freehand and inside masked panels, until I was happy with the result.

Final assembly is quick and easy. All of the smaller details are well moulded and nicely detailed, the undercarriage being particularly so, the delicacy and intricacy of the original features being well captured. The canopies are similarly impressive, being crystal clear and sharply formed. Though not mentioned in the instructions, the canopies can be fixed in the open position - just be careful with the glue!

The kit includes a small collection of whizz-bangs to dress up the model, but in keeping with our reference shots, it was decided to only use a couple of underwing tanks and two empty missile rails. This seemed to suit the clean look of this aircraft and so we were happy to consign the PL-8 and PL-9 missiles to the spares' box for future use.

"The simplicity of the colour scheme is matched by the paucity of the markings - it's about as easy as it gets!"



FINAL VERDICT

This is a fun kit of an unusual subject. The detail, fit and shape all combine to create a model that certainly captures the feel of the original aircraft and that has allowed me to add a type to my collection from an airforce that I have until now, not really looked at. I like this kit, I enjoyed putting it together and I now have model that looks good in the display case. You can't really ask any more than that, can you?
Thanks go out to Pocketbond for the review sample.

KIT PREVIEW

AVANTEGARDE MODEL KITS (AMK) 1:48 MIG-31 FOXHOUND

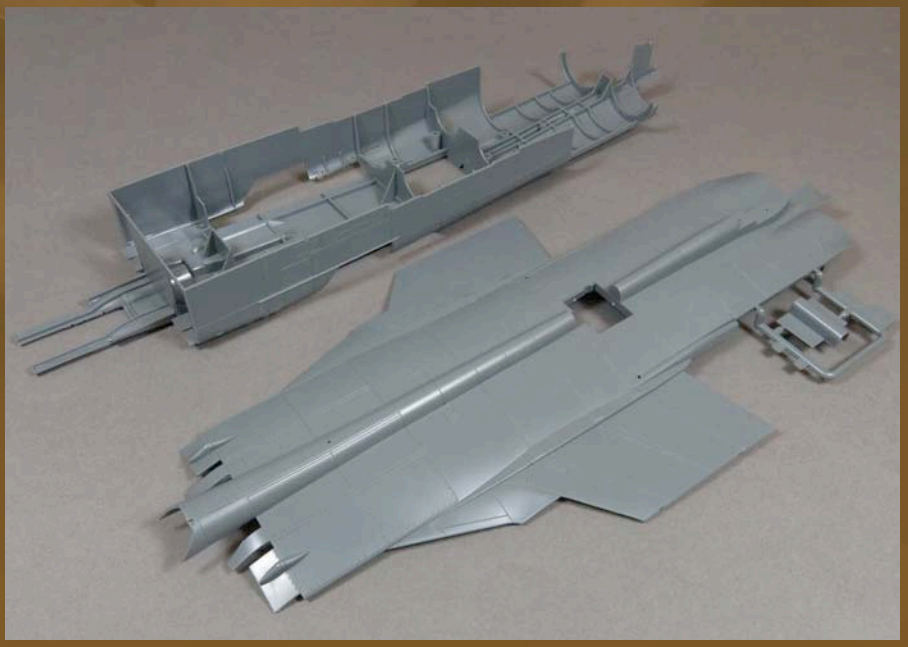
AvanteGarde has certainly hit the ground running, the last year or so seeing them release a number of very impressive kits, each seemingly better than the last. Following the appearance of the a Kfir, Delfin and Magister in 1:48, they have now tackled one of the most impressive aircraft in service today, the incredible and enormous, MiG-31 Foxhound.

Designed from the ground up to be a modeller's model, this new kit combines very impressive levels of detail - both inside and out - with seemingly low levels of complexity. Though offering a large number of parts within the box, the designers have tried to create a kit that is as modeller friendly as possible and one that even the novice builder could tackle with relative ease. Having now looked at the kit in some detail, I think they may just have succeeded…

From opening the box to examining the kit more closely, you are struck by the incredible levels of detail across almost all of the parts, from the involved two-seat cockpit, though to the almost complete engines, the deft realisation of the undercarriage bays, legs and wheels, through to the clever design of the almost one-piece underwing stores, this is a kit that begs to be built. Add to that short list, the idea that the kit's breakdown facilitates quick assembly and the pleasure that you will derive from building it, is there for all to see.

The quality of the detail is very impressive, as is the use of complex slide mould technology that helps break the huge fuselage down into a minimum number of parts. Seeing the nose moulded in one piece for the first time is a real highlight, but that is matched by the size and complexity of the two upper and lower fuselage sections; combining to create a model that is almost the same size as a 1:32 Tornado, the impression that these parts leave is long lasting. But that impression of quality















simply deepens as the parts are examined further, with seemingly little across its exterior and interior surfaces, left bare, or undetailed. And then there are those missiles, R-33, R-73 and R-77s being offered, most in one piece…

Construction begins with the engines and then moves on to the intakes tunnels and the main gear bays that form much of their outer surfaces, Though well detailed, the engines will be all but invisible within the actual model, though they do of course provide the illusion of both full-length engines and jet pipes, once in place.

Much of the upper fuselage and wings comprise little more than a handful of parts, a large, full-span wing, joining to that upper fuselage panel to complete the picture. The use of a large wing section is clever, because not only does it add strength to what is a sizeable sub-assembly, it also sets the wings' slight anhedral. A choice of flaps is supplied that allow either retracted or drooped features, the same being said for the leading edge slats. Indeed, all control surfaces are offered as separate parts, so a degree of movement can be imparted in each one should the mood take you.

Smaller details are similarly well handled. The cockpit is superb, as are the undercarriage legs and ancillary doors. I was surprised to see no seat straps in the kit, but I'm sure it won't be long before the aftermarket catches up! Incidentally, full painting instructions are provided throughout the instruction to tell you what's what's - nothing it seems is left to chance!

The kit supplies decals for four different Foxhounds. The choices are as follows:

- MiG-31BM '34 Red', Ivan Pilipenko, Russian AF
- MiG-31BM '93 Blue' Russian AF, Moscow-Zhukovsky (Ramenskoye) 2009
- MiG-31BM '93 Blue' Russian AF, Moscow-Zhukovsky (Ramenskoye) 2013
- MiG-31BSM '25 Red' Russian AF, Akhubinsk AB, 2014

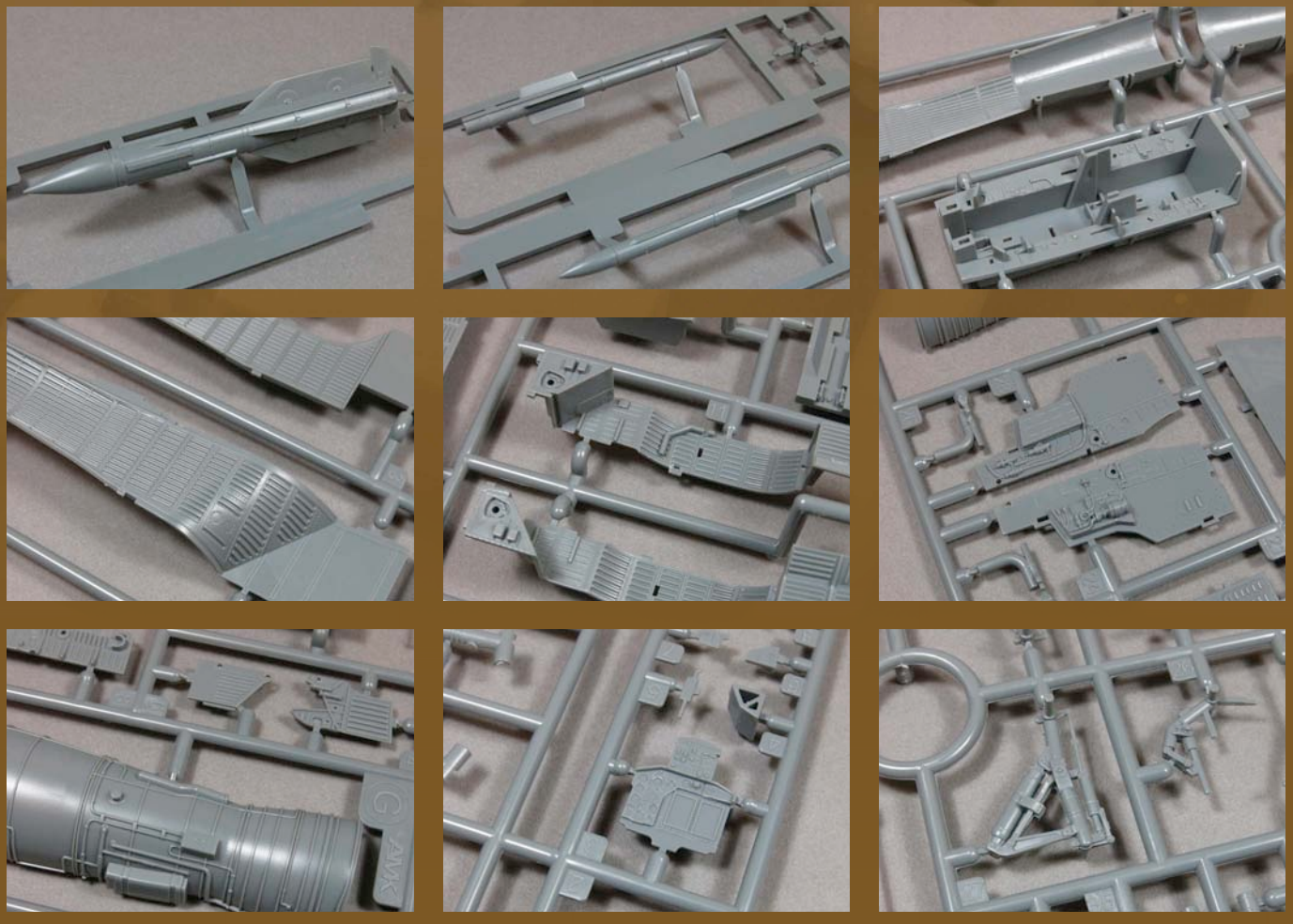
All of the aircraft are painted overall pale grey, two sheet of decals being supplied to decorate both the model and it's weapons.

FINAL VERDICT

By any measure this is a fantastic kit. It's as complete as any we have seen this year and that places it well within the running for kit of the year 2015. But it's the sensible way that it has been approached that sets it apart - it's so well done, you can't help but want clear the bench and get started. And that's what we plan to do so that we can bring you a full appraisal, we hope, in the next issue.

Thanks to Martin Wilson of AMK for the review sample.

"It's as complete as any we have seen this year and that places it well within the running for kit of the year 2015"





Poles apart in terms of design but both are worthy opponents in the air-to-air arena. The Sea Harriers of the Royal Navy and the French Air Force Mirage 2000s operated together for years. The constant ACM exercises proved their worth during operations over Bosnia, with both types operating in partnership to ensure no NATO strike aircraft were attacked. FAA via author



BAE SYSTEMS SEA HARRIER FA.MK 2

Written by Model Airplane International

After the Falklands War, the Royal Navy's Sea Harrier pilots had proved themselves highly skilled and superbly trained: nonetheless, experts acknowledged that the Royal Navy had been lucky to meet an enemy who could not expose the Sea Harrier's fundamental weakness – it was a subsonic, unsophisticated fighter that had managed to blast Argentina's Mirages, Daggers and Skyhawks from the sky. In response the development of an ambitious Sea Harrier upgrade was accorded the highest priority and urgency. The result of the programme was the Sea Harrier FRS.Mk 2, an extremely advanced derivative of the original Sea Harrier with all-new capabilities, and was an aircraft viewed by many at the time as the best ship borne fighter in the West.





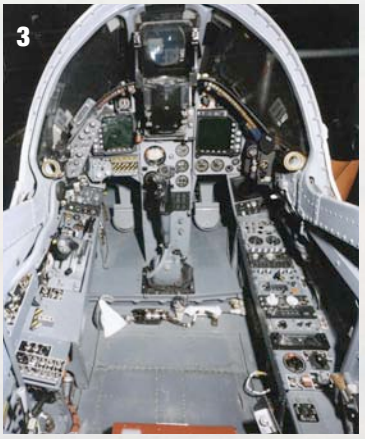
1. ZA195 was the first of two FRS.Mk 2 development aircraft, making its first flight on September 19, 1983. This aircraft did not have radar, and carried a probe on the radome. Neither of the development aircraft had the dynamic pressure probe for the flight control system installed in the fin leading edge. RN via author. 2. Early FRS.Mk 2 deliveries were made in the original extra dark sea grey scheme with toned down national insignia. ZA195 carries black/white calibration squares on the nose and tail. The aircraft was heavily involved in missile development trials for the FRS.Mk 2. Author's collection

A number of minor upgrades had and were being performed on the FRS.Mk 1s then in operational service with the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) which were designated as the Phase I Updates however, by 1985 BAe and Marconi received a contract for the upgrading of 30 FRS.Mk 1s in what was designated the Sea Harrier Improvement Programme (SHIP), the Mid-Life Update (MLU) and finally as the Phase II Update. The heart of this upgrade was going to be the provision of a new radar and a long-range air-to-air missile, it was soon clear that these would be, respectively, Ferranti's ARI.50019 Blue Vixen and the Raytheon AIM-120 AMRAAM. The capabilities of the Blue Vixen radar were without dispute and early tests proved that it was as the most advanced lightweight high-performance radar then under development in Europe or the US.

Subsequently BAe in December 1988, was given a £170 million contract to upgrade 29 of the surviving Sea Harriers to FRS.Mk 2 standards (the total of surviving aircraft was then 35 aircraft, but this was reduced to 33 by continuing attrition). Four more conversions were funded in 1994 together with 18 new-build FRS.Mk 2s. An A-Model (Development) Blue Vixen was flight-tested over 121 sorties (114 hours) in a RAE BAC One-Eleven ZF433, and later in a pair of BAe 125s. The broadly representative A-Model radar was first flown in XW930 on August 26, 1988, while in September 1989 another BAe 125 ZF130 flew a B-Model pre-production radar. The latter aircraft had first flown on May 20, 1988 and began development flying that December. The aircraft was fitted with a mocked-up Sea harrier FRS.Mk 2 cockpit in place of the co-pilots usual displays, and carried an AMRAAM simulator and an underwing AIM-9 Sidewinder acquisition round. The radar's design team's efforts were not lost on the pilots of the FAA. One Sea Harrier pilot later commented: "Making an intercept was simply down to selecting air-to-air mode, pointing the aircraft in roughly the right direction and leaving the rest to the radar!" Coupled with the AIM-120 AMRAAM, which was designed as a successor to the AIM-7 Sparrow, the new missile was lighter, faster and less smoky than the Sparrow. The FRS.Mk 2 would be the first non-US combat aircraft to carry AMRAAMs and in theory the Blue Vixen was able to support up to four AIM-120s simultaneously inflight, although all four targets would have had to remain with the radar's 'gimbal' limits.

Airframe Mods

Changes to the Sea Harrier airframe were deliberately minimised in order to speed the programme along, these were restricted



3. The 'new' Sea Harrier's cockpit was dominated by two MFDs and a head-up display with Up Front Controller. While some of the instruments remained the same, they were relocated and in some cases, made smaller to accommodate the new displays. RN via author

MAIN IMAGE. Although superficially similar (apart from the obvious new radome), to the FRS. Mk 1 represented a dramatic leap in capability, especially in the air-to-air role where its radar/ missile combination was the envy of many fighter pilots in the West. RN via author



to a new bulbous, blunt radome which necessitated the relocation of the pitot tubes to either side of the forward fuselage. Initially it appeared that two fuselage plugs would be needed both fore and aft of the wing, but after wind tunnel testing only the tail selection was lengthened by 'splicing in' a plug. The original tail units were retained. The wing received minor modifications, with the mid-span dogtooth giving way to a gentler kink, and a new dogtooth added close to the root.

One of the most significant changes for pilots was the improvements made in the cockpit. The FRS.Mk 2 introduced a new Up Front Controller for the HUD, two Ferranti MED 2066 CRT displays, which displaced some instruments, necessitating a rearrangement of the remaining analogue dial instruments, some of which were replaced by smaller, standby instruments. The provision of two multi-function displays (MFDs) allowed the pilot to use the right-hand display for radar data, and the left-hand for a navigation display.

The newer Pegasus Mk 106 engine – a rebuilt and modified engine, powered the FRS.MK 2. The Mk 106 offered a slight increase in thrust and improved thrust at lower operating temperatures, thereby extending engine life.

A New SHAR...

The first FRS.Mk 2 prototype, ZA195, made its maiden flight from BAe's Dunsfold site on September 19, 1988, in the hands of test pilot Heinz Frick. The 40-minute flight began with a conventional take-off and ended with a rolling vertical landing. The aircraft carried a combined pitot probe and test instrumentation boom at the 'point' of the



4

new radome.

A second prototype, XZ439, joined the flight test programme on March 8, 1989. This aircraft wore a lighter grey colour scheme and had no pitot probe on its radome, instead replying on a pitot head on the lower side of the nose. This lighter colour scheme was destined to be adopted as the standard for the FRS.Mk 2, although a handful of aircraft were delivered in the original darker scheme.

The two aircraft quickly undertook a series of trials, the most intensive of which was a 10-day/76-sortie series of deck evaluations aboard HMS Ark Royal. This took place between November 7-16. During this time the aircraft carried a variety of loads including drop tanks, AIM-9s, AIM-120s and 1,000lb bombs. Trials showed that the aircraft's operating characteristics were a slightly different to those of the FRS.Mk 1 but the new variant was cleared to use the 120 ski-jump.

Under Scrutiny

Despite the success of the trials by 1990 criticism of the programme's spiralling cost which was denied by the then Defence Secretary Tom King, he could not hide the fact that the whole project had risen from £19.8 million to £63.2 million and slipped by 18 months.

Live firings of the AIM-120 by the FRS.Mk 2 had been scheduled for mid-1991 but were delayed due to software problems. It was not until January 1993 the XZ439 arrived at Eglin AFB in Florida to begin the firing trials. Ten AMRAAMs were launched, in a variety of configurations against MQM-107 drones and QF-106 drones. The first lookdown, shoot-down firing was on April 28.

With testing in the US on going, back in the UK the Operational Evaluation Unit (OEU) for the FRS.Mk 2 was formed at RAE Boscombe Down on June 1, 1993 as an offshoot of 899 Squadron. The unit was made up of four senior pilots from the naval air squadron. The OEU received its first aircraft ZD615/723 on June 21 and a second on August 19 (ZE695), which had been the first FRS.Mk 2 to be handed over to the Royal Navy. By September the OEU had a third aircraft on charge.

Yeovilton Ops

The first Sea Harrier FRS.Mk 2 ZA176/716 finally arrived at RNAS Yeovilton for 899 Squadron in September 1993, and the OEU aircraft re-joined those of the training unit, 899 Squadron, at Yeovilton from early January 1994. The new squadron had enough aircraft itself to begin conversion training for the first four front-line squadron pilots in March.

Such was the convoluted conversion process, which could see airframes out of operational service for up to 12 months, that every Royal Navy Sea Harrier, including former development aircraft, were converted to FRS.Mk 2 standards.

It was clear that some 'new build' aircraft would be needed and 18 were constructed at BAe's Brough works, and assembled and flight-tested at Dunsfold prior to being delivered to the navy, the last of which was ZH813 delivered on December 24, 1998 to the navy. Significantly it would be the last 'all-British' fighter produced.

Trials and clearance work continued throughout 1993-94 involving firing of the ADEN 30mm cannon, live AIM-9 firings and another round of ski-jump launches some of which were at night. It was at this time the aircraft received a new designation, changing from FRS.Mk 2 to F/A.Mk 2, with the dropping of the R-for reconnaissance designation.

In September 1994 the OEU detachment of four F/A.Mk 2s deployed aboard HMS Invincible for an Adriatic cruise accompanying

4. A change is coming – a total of seven RAF GR.7s from 3(F) Squadron and nine FA.Mk 2s Sea Harriers from 800 and 801 Squadrons launched from HMS Invincible in the space of 13 minutes, making this the largest ever single launch of Harriers from an Invincible-class aircraft carrier. The gradual stepping up of maritime RAF Harrier operations would help bring an end to the Sea Harrier's operational service and mark the beginning of Joint Force 2000. RN via author. 5. A major milestone was achieved on March 29, 1993 when XZ439 fired the first AIM-120 AMRAAM over the Elgin AFB range in the United States. Ten firings were made during the programme, including launches from both wing and fuselage hard-points. During the trials XZ439 was decorated with a shark's mouth. RN via author. 6. Retaining the overall extra dark sea grey scheme this 899 Squadron example illustrates the early scheme of using a gloss black outline for the 'winged fist' badge on the tail. The bolt-on inflight refuelling probe and dual AIM-9 Sidewinder rails would become standard on the Sea Harriers during the early FRS.Mk 2 deployments supporting NATO operations. All images author's collection unless stated. 7. Despite being relatively new into service, ZA176/716 is already displaying the customary exhaust staining on its lower fuselage that all Harriers are known for. The jet is returning to RNAS Yeovilton after some ACM training, it carries AIS pod on port outer pylon and a drill AIM-9 on the starboard side, the opposition in this case was some RAF ADV Tornados. Note the lack of ventral gun pods. 8. Wearing the later overall medium sea grey scheme XZ455/717 waits for clearance to depart RAF Waddington after some ACM training. Waddington ran the North Sea ACMI range and was home to the annual Exercise NOMAD which saw a number of NATO fighter squadrons regularly participate in large scale air-to-air training. Against French Air Force Mirage 2000s and Swiss Air Force F/A-18 the Sea Harriers were more than a match in the right circumstances. 9. Another Exercise NOMAD, another Sea Harrier FA.Mk 2 loaded with an AIS pod ready for 'combat'. This jet has borrowed s drop tanks from an older FRS.Mk 1 as they are still in the extra dark sea grey colour. Moral among the small band of fixed-wing navy pilots remained high and was demonstrated with the return of full colour 800 Squadron markings to the tail in 2004 during the final year of their service.

six early FRS.Mk 1s from the ship's 800 Squadron.

On The Front Line

With 800 Squadron at sea aboard HMS Invincible, 801 Squadron became the first front line unit to re-equip with the new variant, with aircraft ZA176/000 and XZ455/001 on October 5, 1994. The squadron took its first six F/A.Mk 2s to sea on January 26, 1995 aboard HMS Illustrious, which replaced Invincible on station in the Adriatic for NATO peacekeeping duties following the breakup of Yugoslavia.

Having returned from their last FRS.Mk 1 operational deployment, 800 Squadron began conversion to the F/A.Mk 2 in early 1995, during which the aircraft's designation was tweaked again to simply FA.Mk 2. The squadron made its first Adriatic Cruise aboard HMS Invincible in late 1995, and it was during this cruise that FA.Mk 2s participated in Operation Deliberate Force, mainly flying air defence sorties, but also attacking a Serb ammunition on September 5. During Deliberate Force the Sea Harriers struck three significant targets from what was NATO's overall target list. For this 36 aircraft sorties were flown over nine missions. Over a three-year period 800 Squadron flew 1,784 operational sorties over the Adriatic and Balkans without loss.

A second Sea Harrier deployment to the area by 801 Squadron aboard HMS Illustrious was significant as it was also the first missions flown with AMRAAMs. The first of which took place on December 25, 1995, although the Sea Harrier's new BVR capability was not tested in combat, it was a significant capability to have on side.

Radar Rules Over Bosnia

As the FA.Mk 2 squadrons grew accustomed to the capabilities of their new mount, it quickly became clear that the 'new' Sea Harrier was 'arguably the most capable Fleet Air Defence fighter of its generation' – a view which was shared by all of those who had flown against it. These claims were based around the capabilities of the Blue Vixen radar. During operations over the Balkans, NATO commanders soon came to regard the Sea Harrier FA.Mk 2 as the next most capable airborne radar platform to the E-3 Sentry AWACS. Sea Harriers were occasionally used to plug gaps in NATO's radar coverage, where they proved more than capable of tracking slow-flying low-level helicopters. After one large maritime exercise in 1996 a senior USAF officer commented that the "little Brit jet's radar" is more capable than the US Navy's F/A-18s! When operating in conjunction with the FA.Mk 2's AIM-120 AMRAAMs the partnership was viewed as the most capable BVR capability then in the West.

As the situation across the former Yugoslavia worsened NATO operations stepped up and it was clear to many in the Royal Navy that the FA.Mk 2 would be playing a significant part in supporting the increased NATO presence in the region. Air operations against the Serbs in Kosovo increased with























10. As an element of 899 Squadron, the Operational Evaluation Unit (OEU) was established in June 1993 to provide operational guidance on the newly introduced FA.Mk 2. Based at Yeoviltion the aircraft, one of which is pictured, were temporarily flown off aircraft carriers to provide a pilot's manual on how to operate the new variant. The three OEU jets wore the newly introduced medium sea grey scheme with an extra dark sea grey radome. Pale pink/pale blue roundels were introduced and were later followed by 899 Squadron's winged fist on the tail. 11. It took some time for the new Sea Harriers to gain squadron markings. In the early days the aircraft simply operated from a pool of available airframes regardless of what pilot was flying the jet. With only white Royal Navy titling on the tail and aircraft code '123' on the intake, this FA.Mk 2 actually belongs to 800 Squadron and carries the serial ZD607 on the ventral strake. 12. The grubby appearance and badly torn 801 Squadron rudder are signs that this Sea Harrier has been working hard. Extra dark sea grey drop tanks were a common sight on the FA.Mk 2s. Of note is the patchy appearance of the rear fuselage and green band around the rear of the IFR nozzle. 13. A key feature of the Sea Harrier's design was its compactness, allowing it to fit on UK carrier decks and lifts without the need for weight-increasing folding mechanisms. Two FA.Mk 2s awaiting the day's flying activities aboard HMS Invincible. Soon the tie-down chains will be removed and the aircraft loaded with practice bombs. 14. Sea Harriers were not known for their noseart or special markings, although a few retirement schemes appeared at the end of their service. But back in February 1998, ZD608 carried six bomb symbols on its nose from operations over the former Yugoslavia. The jet is still fitted with the IFR probe which was standard for Sea Harriers operating as part of the NATO force in the region. 15. In this view the 'sit' of the Sea Harrier is readily apparent, noteworthy is the weight on main under carriage and nose wheel, giving an almost horizontal appearance to the jet as opposed to the normal nose-high static angle. The 801 Squadron markings did not remain intact for very long on ZD615.

Sea Harriers providing air defence for strike aircraft, or carrying out their own missions with 1,000lb or 2,000lb bombs mounted under the wing or a single example on the centreline pylon.

It was during operations against Serbian forces that a propaganda film was released to the media whereby the Serbs, claimed to have shot down a Harrier. The tape was quickly found to be that of an FRS.Mk 1 brought down over Gorazde in 1994. That navy pilot was later rescued by the SAS and evacuated by a French army helicopter.

The Right Decision...

The small number of FA.Mk 2s continued to play a significant role with the Royal Navy and NATO and it was intended to keep the jet in service until at least 2010 by which time is was expected that the first examples of the Joint Strike Fighter (F-35 Lightning II) would be shortly entering service.

In 1998, the Government announced a major change to the Harrier Force, stating that all would come under one unified command known as Joint Force 2000, which would include both RAF and Fleet Air Arm units and provide the ability for both services to operate together from land and sea. The Joint Harrier Force was formed on April 1, 2000, and shortly afterwards part of the unit deployed aboard HMS Illustrious to offer air cover to British ground forces operating in Sierra Leone. The aircraft were used as a visible deterrent in the region conducting countless 'show of force' flights to aggressors in the area.

Despite the combined operations as the F-35 project slipped further and further behind and the costs escalated the British Government was forced to make some painful decision in terms of controlling its Defence Budget – the most significant announcement to come from this was that the Sea Harrier FA.Mk 2 would be withdrawn from service beginning in 2006. The decision was taken on the basis that there would be significant 'difficulties' in upgrading the Sea Harrier's capabilities still further and that modifications to the Pegasus Mk 106 engines, which were then reaching the end of their lives would be prohibitively expensive. The Type 45 anti-air warfare destroyers entering service could now, it was stated, accomplish the capabilities offered by the Sea Harriers.

The decision to abandon the Sea Harrier was purely made on the basis of cost savings as it was expected to save £135 million and that a further £230 million could be saved by not implementing an engine upgrade.

The last operational sortie for the FA.Mk 2 took place on March 28, 2006 801 Squadron performed a five-aircraft flypast over RNAS Yeovilton to mark the premature retirement of the Sea Harrier from British service. The navy was now left without a fixed-wing fast jet in its inventory. As if to realise the political and public fallout of this decision, the aircraft were quickly ferried to RAF Shawbury to be placed in storage away from prying eyes.

The School of Flight Deck Operations based at RNAS Culdrose later used a small number of grounded FA.Mk 2s until 2012. ●

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First of Grumman's highly successful line of prop-driven 'Cats', the Wildcat, in guises from F4F-3 to FM-2 held the line after the Pearl Harbour attack and served from then until the end of WW2. It was idea for operations from the small escort carriers. (90 images)

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The awesome twin engine long range fighter of the late WW2 era operated by US Navy and US Marines. (60 Images)

Grumman F6F Hellcat CD55
The US Navy's most important, and most successful fighter of WW2, photographed, close-up, from nose to tail and wing tip to wing tip. Example shown is part of The Fighter Collection, based at Duxford. (90 images)

Grumman F3F CD54
A study of the faithfully replicated example of the 1930s U.S. Navy biplane as seen at the 2001 Flying Legends Show. (34 images)

Gloster Gladiator CD53
The Royal Air Force's last biplane fighter, star of late 1930s air shows and flown in combat during early WW2, including Battle of France, Battle of Britain, Mediterranean operations and North Africa. (50 images)

Fokker D.VIII CD52
The Fantasy of Flight Museum's example of the late WW1 Imperial German Air Service monoplane fighter, in full detail. (69 images)

Fokker D.VII CD51
The most famous of all the German fighter aircraft of WW1. The collection depicts the RAF Museum, Hendon's authentic, restored example. (44 images)

Focke Wulf FW 190A CD50
Germany's 'butcher bird' fighter of WW2, active on all combat fronts from 1941 onwards.

Fieseler Storch CD49
Arguably the first military STOL aircraft, this storky looking aircraft has long been a modellers' favourite. Two examples are represented, the machine at the Fantasy of Flight Museum in Florida and the RAF Museum Cosford's example. (90 images)

Fairey Gannet ASW1 & T.2 CD48
The Royal Navy's post-WW2 anti-submarine workhorse, that also served with a number of other air-arms. Most images are of Mk.T.2, that was more-or-less the same as the ASW.1. (110 images)

Fairchild Ranger CD47
Elegant U.S. high wing light aircraft in full detail. Two examples shown. (60 images)

Erco Ercoupe 415 & Avalon Ercoupe CD46
The elegant twin finned light/sport aircraft. Both original Type 415 and later Alon resurection examples. (115 images)

DHC Chipmunk CD45
A bumper bundle of images that provides a vast array of detail pictures, plus photos of examples in both RAF trainer and civil colours. (70 images)

DH Tiger Moth CD44
Much close-up detail of civil register example, plus further detail of the IWM Duxford's example in Royal Navy trainer colours, showing the blind flying hood. (110 images)

De Havilland DH89 Dragon Rapide CD43
Graceful twin engine biplane airliner that saw service from pre-WW2 through to the mid 1950s. Several are still flying and three are shown in this picture collection. (100 images)

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Forerunner of the more famous DH 89 Dragon Rapide, this collection depicts a superbly restored example. (40 images)

DE Havilland DH 60 CD41
The aircraft that set the British 'club' flying movement on the road to success during the 1930s. (140 images)

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1920s lightweight low wing sports aircraft designed to a low-power specification. Machine illustrated is the sole remaining example. (60 images)

Curtiss P-40M CD39
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Curtiss P-40B Tomahawk CD38
Rare, full restored example of the early version of the Curtiss fighter aircrfaft that was at Pearl Harbour on Dec. 7th 1941 – and survived the attack! (130 images)

Curtiss Jn-4 'Jenny' CD37
An authentic, restored example in full detail. (130 images)

Curtiss Hawk 75 CD36
The 'export' version of the Curtiss P-36 that saw service in durng WW2 with Finland and during the 'Battle of France' in May/June 1940. Example shown is a combat veteran. (130 images)

Comper Swift CD35
1930s racing aircraft. Example depicted is the radial engined example at Shuttleworth Mussel (91 images)

Cierva C.30 Autogiro CD34
A study of the example hung in the Fantasy of Flight Museum, finished in RAF WW2 colours. (35 images)

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The famous 'bent wing bird' in super detail. (132 images)

Bucker Jungmeister CD29
Radial engine version. Example from Fantasy of Flight Museum. (79 images)

Bucker Bestmann CD28
Authentic example as exhibited at the Fantasy of Flight Museum, in WW2 Luftwaffe colour scheme. (43 images)

Bristol M.1C CD27
Early WW1 fighter monoplane. Example depicted is the faithfully authentic replica built by the Northern Aero Works and operated by the Shuttleworth Trust museum. (100 images)

Bristol F2B Brisfit CD26
Full close-up detail, including photos of engine cowls for both Rolls Royce Falcon and Hispano-Suiza engines. (28 images)

Bristol Bulldog CD25
This collection depicts the example assembled from two donor airframes and restored to superb standard by Skysport Engineering. It can now be seen at the Royal Air Force museum, Hendon. (60 images)

Boeing Pt-13/17 Stearman CD24
Subject aircraft is a current British civil register example used for air-show displays. (54 images)

Bleriot Monoplane CD23
The Shuttleworth Museum's machine, the oldest original example still flying. Much close-up detail showing all the exposed rigging, structure and the "bedstead" main undercarriage, plus Anzani engine. (74 images)

Bell P-39Q Airacobra CD22
Superbly restored example of this much-maligned WW2 fighter aircraft that was used with great success by Russian forces in the ground attack role and with saw much action in the south Pacific, from where this restored example was recovered. (130 images)

Beech D18 Staggerwing CD21
The distinctive back-staggered 1930s biplane with retracting undercarriage. (45 images)

Avro 504k CD20
The Shuttleworth Museum's superbly maintained machine, in full detail. (140 images)

Arrow Active II CD19
Sole remaining example of this 1930s racing and aerobatic biplane restored to pristine condition. (50 images)

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Mk.2
- XT680 in Cyprus 2002
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- XR503 of RAE Bedford 1989 and XV728 now in the Newark Air Museum

Mk.5
- XT772 'Green Parrot' Admirals barge of 781 squadron
- XT765 (ex 771 Squadron) of Colerne Airfield
- XS482 of RAF Manston Museum
- XT765 of 845 Squadron

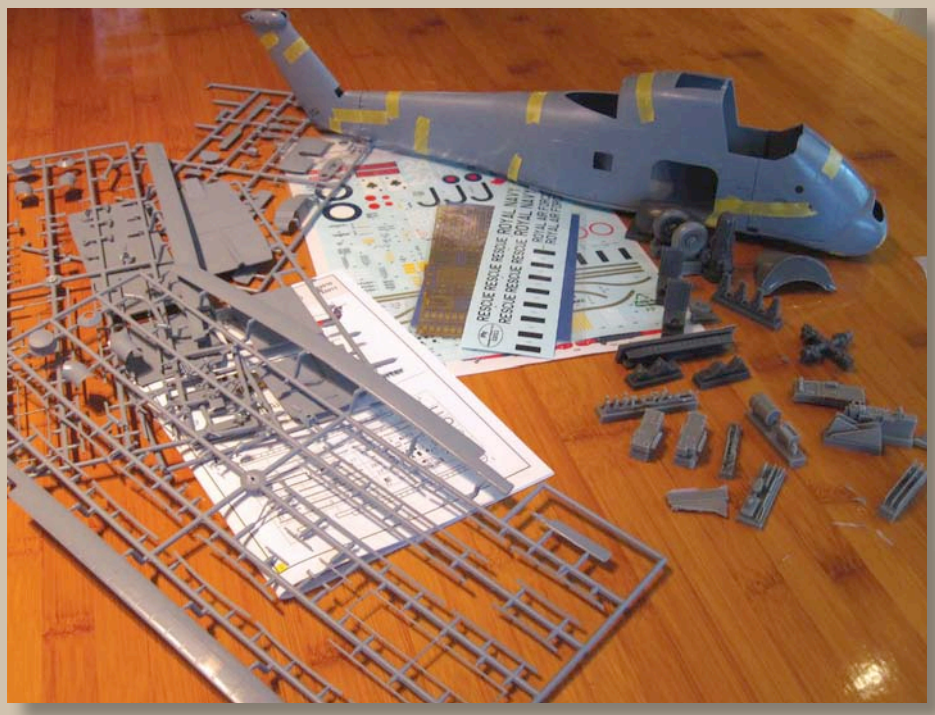
On opening the box you are presented with a multi media kit, after diving past the decals, a A5, clearly informative instruction book, A4 colour markings card, etched-brass frets and two bags containing resin detail parts such as the main gearbox, rotor head, wheels, and the distinctive louvered beehive fairing. At first inspection they look very detailed and in particular the cockpit seats struck me as being a striking resemblance of the real items. Dig deeper into the bowels of the box and the clear parts are housed in two separate plastic wallets, the detail look fine and crisp.

The decals are supplied by Bodecek decals and look in register and to be a good quality. My concerns begin with the Red/Black and Red/White DANGER decal; this does not look correct at all. In addition the decals' crispness is called into question especially with the squadron crests of 771 and 781 and the Ace of Clubs emblem of 771 squadron. Turning to the Mk.2 decals it's more of the same; the DANGER decal is not correct.

The etched fret adds some fine detail around the kit. I especially like the cockpit step extensions designed on the real aircraft for Heavy Arctic boots. The obligatory transmission grills are also covered in the two frets, but a nice touch is that the seat belts are also etch and with a combination of a printed coloured paper set, the seats and webbing are assembled in a manner this manufacturer has used before to some effect.

Down sides to the plastic parts are for me the windows; the Mk.2 smaller windows are as standard so if it's a Mk.5 you're modelling then out comes the cutting tools. In addition, the Flotation canisters are too squared off and the Rolls Royce Gnome engine exhausts seem on the small size. One further thing is the omission of the pressure refuel cap on the starboard side waterline. The HF Antenna seems very slim to me as well (parts F2).

As described before, the resin adds to the crispness of certain components and assemblies on the model. The overhead cockpit console with the rotor brake is a prime example, however the brake is shown in the 'off' position so reference will be needed if you wish to model an accurate static stance. The main wheels will need a drill through the hubs if the flotation canisters are to be removed as the helicopter has a hollow axle and this allows the attachment of the canisters through the hub and onto the axle. The two main tyres and tail tyre even have the manufacture's name on the side walls. On the reverse of the wheel assemblies the three pot brake calliper is beautifully depicted. One slightly odd but understandably effective part is the engine intake cover situated on the nose of the helicopter; the plastic coated canvas cover is cast in a single large piece that sits over the ever cavernous intake 'mouth', this mouth gives the later marks of Wessex that distinctive shape around the front. Fly have managed to dodge the awkward shape and presentation that Italeri struggled with in the 1/48 scale Wessex. For me Fly has given the modeller a way out of this minefield and they should be commended for that…









VERDICT

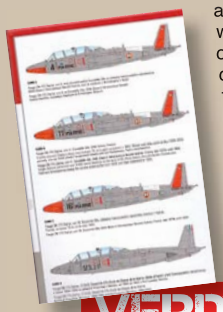
A large and commanding kit of this impressive helicopter. There's plenty here to please the modeller and with care and attention, they will be rewarded with a model that will be the highlight of their display case. Highly recommended. (Ian McGonagle)

SCALE 1:72

FOUGA CM.175 ZÉPHYR

Scale: 1:72/Special Hobby/Materials: IM/Kit No: 72323/All Good Model Shops/Price Guide: £





Though this kit has been on sale for some time, this is the first opportunity to look at it closely and see if all of the fuss that seems to have been caused by its released, is justified.

Initial impressions are of course important during any assessment, so the opening of the well-illustrated box to reveal a huge number of well-moulded plastic parts, a superb set of instructions and a decal sheet that offers four individual aircraft, is a good start. Digging a little deeper and we suddenly become aware that this is a very fine kit indeed, with levels of complexity and detail that would grace a 1:48 offering, let alone one created in 1:72. Across the board detail is comprehensive, sharp and perfectly rendered. The panel lines are the match of anything from the Far East, the depiction of both the individual panel breaks, scoops, vents and access hatches that create much of the charm of this little aircraft, are all present and correct. The interior is similarly well-treated; a large cockpit tub is decorated with raised panel and side console detail, truly tiny control columns and sharp seats. Only straps are missing: add them and the cockpit will look more than acceptable from the box, with no further additions.

The plastic parts also include intake tunnels, fan and exhaust details, comprehensively recreated undercarriage bays (with separate liners), undercarriage legs and wheels, the nose wheel being split in two to replicate its grooved appearance. Separate airbrakes that protrude through the wing and perfectly clear glazing that can be posed open, completes the package.

Decals are provide for four French Aeronavale aircraft, three in silver and dayglo, the other a simpler, overall silver scheme. The decals are well-printed and upon first impression, perfectly in register. Along with the unit markings and numbers, the sheet also includes a fair set of stencils - good for those of us who like the complexity that this helps impart.

VERDICT

What a fantastic kit! Modellers who enjoy 1:72 are spoilt these days with releases that are more and more detailed and comprehensively packaged. This is one of those kits. The Fouga Magister/Zéphyr has always been an attractive aircraft and is thus perfect for a miniature. What a pleasure then that the latest to appear in 1:72, is every bit as attractive as the full-sized aircraft it replicates. Superb and highly recommended.

SCALE 1:72

LAVOCKIN LA-5FN 'ACES'

Scale: 1:72/KP/Materials: IM/Kit No. KPM0035/All Good Model Shops/Price Guide: £

- Reissued kit
- High levels of detail
- Fully detailed interior
- Open or closed canopy
- Decals for three Russian Aces: White 76, flow by Maj. I. Vishnyakov; White 07, flown by Lt. Yu. Lyubenyuk; White 14 flown by Capt. K. Evstigneev.

VERDICT

A reasonably delicate kit from KP that combines well-moulded parts with neat touches of detail and a simple breakdown. The cockpit is a standout feature, with a full set of internal framing, seat, instrument panel and an open fuselage bay revealing internal stringer and compressed gas bottles. Decals are superb, well printed and perfectly in register - the choices being as revealed above. A nice kit that will not tax anyone above absolute beginner. Nice…



SCALE 1:72

MESSERSCHMITT BF-109G-6AS

Scale: 1:72/AZ Model/Materials: IM/Kit No. AZ7509/All Good Model Shops/Price Guide: £

- Reissued Model
- Incredible levels of detail
- Complete cockpit that's aftermarket level
- Decals for three different aircraft: 2./Erg.JG2, Hagenow-Land, December 1944; 1./NJGr.10, flown by Friedrich-Karl Müller, August 1944; 1./JG3, Gütersloh, July 1944.

VERDICT

The first time I've seen one of these AZ Models 109s and I have to say, it's very impressive. From tip to toe, this kit is superbly detailed with petite panel; lines, rivets and other panels on the airframe and one of the best cockpits we've ever seen in a kit in this scale, on the inside. Add to that a comprehensive set of instructions and interesting decal choices and you have the basis of a very enjoyable project. Utterly superb.



IMAM (ROMEO) RO.43

Scale: 1:48/Special Hobby/Materials: IM, resin, photo-etch/Kit No. 48169/
All Good Model Shops/Price Guide: £29.99

SCALE 1:48



There's something attractive about the Ro.43 family of aircraft, floatplanes that operated from Italy's ships during WWII. They have an elegant shape that offers a neat canvass for some interesting colour schemes and markings - in essence, we like them!

Special hobby has released a very neat kit of the Romeo in 1:48 that combines well-moulded plastic parts with resin interior sections and sharply defined etched details. Those who have tackled an SH kit before will see much that is familiar here, the plastic parts being delicately formed, the depiction of the fabric wings being pleasing at to scale, not evidence of fabric texture being on show! Internally, the kit scores highly, a very complete cockpit being offered. As with many of SH's kit, there are very few locating pins and tabs, so a certainly amount of care and dexterity will be needed to ensure that the large number of parts are correctly located and secured ready for the closing up of the fuselage. I was particularly taken with the seat straps that are found in etch; these include the distinctive straps and chains found on Italian straps and as such, will add a real touch of detail and finess within the cockpit.

Two decal options are included in the kit: MM27148, 711, catapult of Light Crusier Eugenio d Savoia, 1942; MMXXXX, 921, Battleship Vittorio Veneto, 1941. The decals are well printed and the colour scheme guides, well drawn.

This is no easy kit. The design of the aircraft is such that the struts for the wings and floats will need to be accurately cemented in place. A plastic jig is included in the kit to help with the pigment of the struts between the float and fuselage, but even so, this will be a tricky stage to get right. The wings should be easier, the upper and lower wings both fixing directly to the fuselage, only bracing struts and the outer wings struts - that can be snapped in place after the glue around the wing joints has set - being needed to complete the picture.

VERDICT

This is a fine addition to the SH range. It will not only delight fans of Italian aviation, but those modellers looking for not only something different to build, but something that will test their skills beyond a simple shake-and-bake kit. We like this one and hope to be able to bring you a deeper appraisal in a future issue.

DORNIER 17Z-10

Scale: 1:48/ICM/Materials: IM/Kit No. ICM48243/All Good Model Shops/
Price Guide: £26.99

SCALE 1:48



Recently I built the Classic Airframes Dornier 17Z for the Battle of Britain series and those of you who read the article will remember that it was not the easiest of builds! Well, things are about to change as here we have an all-new Dornier 17 which ICM have just launched into the modelling world. Available as a Z-10 (as reviewed here) and Z-2 version, these are modern state-of–the-art kits. The kit arrives in a fairly large box, the exterior of which is a thin card lid with a rather nice artwork of a Do17Z-10 flying over clouds at night. Removing the lid reveals a substantial top-opening corrugated cared box and within is a large plastic bag containing the parts on five dark grey sprues plus one clear. Instructions and decals are loose in the box.

One look at the parts tells you this is a quality kit; they are beautifully moulded with little or no flash with small sprue gates where parts attach. There are some very delicate parts, for instance the stays for the open cowlings and the single stack exhausts. Panel lines are fine and consistent across the parts. Detail is first class, the multi part engines will look superb once painted as will the superbly detailed undercarriage which lacks only brake hoses.

The only problem I could find with the kit was the engine cowling support struts are wrong. These look almost like a spoke wheel for a motorcycle but in reality had a 5 pointed star arrangement for the supports. This is a very obvious feature so will need to be corrected.

A single clear sprue contains a varied set of canopies which indicate other versions are to come. Looking through the parts it appears there is everything here to build either a Z10 or Z-2. The Z-10 option of this boxing is surprising as less than ten of these were built so options are limited for markings. Decals are provided on a small sheet and look well printed with good colour and register. A clear and concise instruction sheet completes what is an impressive package.

VERDICT

This is a very fine kit that will look amazing once complete. It shows once again what is possible from the designers at ICM and we look forward to getting started on the kit - watch out for a full build report soon! (Alan Price)

ROLAND C.II

Scale: 1:48/Revell/Materials: IM/Kit No. 03965/Availability: Hannants/
Price Guide: £16.99



Another reIssue, this time Eduard's distinctive Roland C.II 'Walfisch' boxed by Revell. The kit is exactly as it appeared on it's first release well over a decade ago, and in this incarnation you get the same as you would have got as an Eduard 'Weekend' edition release but with two and not one decal option.

Eduard set the bar pretty high when they moved to full injection moulding production in the late '90s, and this kit is very good indeed in terms of quality of parts. Detail is crisp where required (the Roland was smooth skinned due to its advanced veneer construction), with little cleaning up of parts required apart from the odd seam line. The fit is very good but I've never really understood why the gunners position requires a separate part to fit onto the upper fuselage, as this provides the modeller with the only difficult challenge with this kit. Blending the part in requires a degree of sanding and as I remember a bit of filling but this is no real problem for the average modeller. With the upper wing mounted onto the fuselage and very thick struts this also means that it's less of a challenge compared to most biplanes, and therefore a great kit to cut your teeth on if you have a fear of such models. There's still rigging to do but the amount is modest compared to other biplanes and again its sturdy construction will allow the novice to handle the model with confidence.

Engine and cockpit are well provided for, the only weak point being the moulded guns, but the are plenty of aftermarket alternatives if you want something more authentic. I would also recommend drilling out the various parts of the exhaust for added realism.

Decals are provided for two options, one four colour camouflage, and the other the distinctive pale blue grey one often associates with this aircraft. It's marked as a C.II, not a C.IIa machine, the latter the result of some airframe changes and the addition of a forward firing Spandau machine gun, but a photograph in Windsock Datafile No.49 shows the addition of a gun to be correct and it's designation as an 'a' open to conjecture.

VERDICT

A very nice model and one that can be recommended to all, particularly novice WW.1 modellers who will find its ease of construction very welcome. (Haris Ali)

AIRCO DH2

Scale: 1:48/Eduard, Czech Republic /Materials: IM/ Kit No. 8094 /Availability: Hannants/
Price Guide: £22.60



A reissue again from Eduard, it's excellent DH2 in Profipack guise, meaning that you get a comprehensive fret of photoetch components, painting masks, and decals to cover four options. The parts are made to the standard that you would expect from Eduard and there are a lot of them considering that it is such a small aircraft. Add the photoetch parts, plus the fact that this is a twin boom pusher aircraft and you have a complex build on your hands which will no doubt be spectacular when it is complete. What makes this model and others like it distinctive is the amount of rigging required, and to my eye the model will look incomplete without it, and this in itself will put many modellers off the subject. The excellent full colour instruction booklet contains a reasonable amount of information to help you here but other reference material will be helpful, and to that end I would refer you to Windsock Datafile No.48 which has been reprinted. The decals are very well printed and round off an excellent package.

VERDICT

With a photo-etched, stripped down version of this aircraft, and a Weekend edition still available, Eduard have given the subject plenty of coverage over the years, even including a 1/72 scale version. This one isn't for the inexperienced given the complexity of the subject and the combination of plastic and etched metal, with some of the components being very small. Add to that the possibility of rigging and you have quite a build on your hands. Eduard have done their best to make this as easy is possible though with a well engineered kit and those who persevere will have a spectacular model. Highly recommended to experienced modellers. (Haris Ali)

GLOSTER GLADIATOR LIMITED EDITION

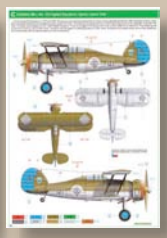
Scale: 1:48/Eduard, Czech Republic/Materials: IM/ Kit No. 1145/
Availability: Hannants /Price Guide: £27.80



An excellent older kit gets a new lease of life as Eduard sprinkle a little bit of their magic dust onto Roden's lovely Gladiator from around twelve years ago. The kit, now in Eduard's trademark grey plastic, is as the kit came originally, stamped with the Roden logo and with parts that cover Marks I and II, Sea Gladiator, plus the extra sprue that contains the parts for the Nordic version with skis. The superb Cartograph decal sheet contains options for eight aircraft, plus there are paint masks and a colour photoetch fret tucked away too. The quality of the mouldings and surface detail is generally very good with the subtle contrast between fabric and metal areas particularly noteworthy. Some of the parts are a bit on the thick side though, pushing the moulding process to the limits. Thankfully the deep sink marks on the otherwise very sturdy undercarriage 'plugs' won't be seen, but some of the rib detail on the inside of the cockpit does mark the outer fuselage surfaces. You can either live with this or apply a small amount of filler over it. Some of the flow marks on the one-piece wings should disappear under the paint. Plenty of choice here for colourful aircraft, covered by classic silver winged aircraft of 73 and 87 Squadrons, two camouflaged RAF aircraft finished in the four upper coloured Shadow Compensating Scheme, a Sea Gladiator of 813 Naval Squadron, plus Belgian, Latvian, and one from the Swedish volunteer Flygflottilj 19 unit sent to Finland. The superb full colour booklet that includes full rigging diagrams completes an excellent package that represents very good value indeed, considering all that it contains. Although there are plenty of aftermarket products on offer, many people will be satisfied with everything that comes in this one box, which remarkably comes at just a small increase in price from the original kit.

Built some time ago from the stock Roden Kit, the authors model shows what is possible from Eduard's rerelease of this excellent kit.





















Built some time ago from the stock Roden Kit, the authors model shows what is possible from Eduard's rerelease of this excellent kit.



VERDICT

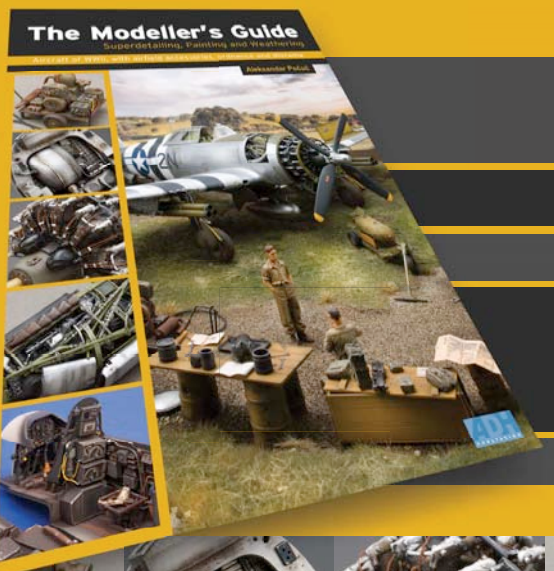
I have very fond memories of building this kit on its original release, and unusually for me I was happy to build two, one after the other. The fit of parts is very good and the models went together with little fuss, even for a biplane! Merit have just released a brand new kit and it will be interesting to see how it compares, but this is one of Roden's best releases and its great to see it being supported so thoroughly by Eduard. It is a limited edition so get it while you can. Very highly recommended. (Haris Ali)

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WINGMAN

www.wingmanmodels.com

SCALE 1:72

1:72 C-130J-C4 Conversion Set
WMF72004

Designed For: Italeri
Material: Resin
Price Guide: £62.00

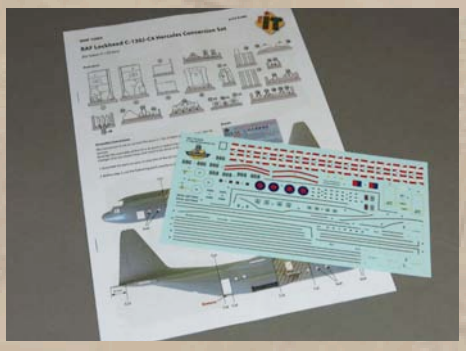
Wingman has created a comprehensive conversion kit for the Italeri 1:72 Hercules, to turn it into the RAF's stretched C-130J-C4.

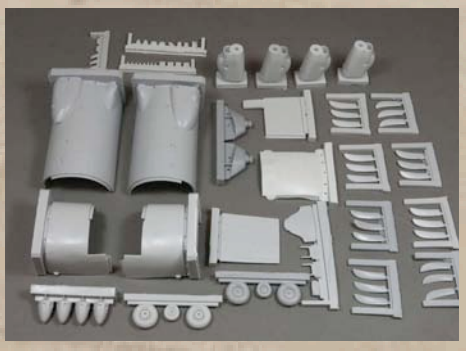
This is is no kit for the faint hearted. The conversion, though complete, will entail cutting up the kit fuselage and then grafting — accurately — the lengthening plugs into place. Given that the kit's airframe is decorated with raised panel lines and the new parts exhibit delicate incised features, you'll also need to rescribe the donor kit parts so that everything matches - a big job!

Detail across the board is very good, the depiction of the new engine nacelles and distinctive 6-bladed propellers, being particularly pleasing. It was also nice to see that Wingman had provided alongside the conversion parts, a set of new wheels with weighted tyres, along with a full set of well-printed RAF decals so that you need look no further for markings for you completed model.

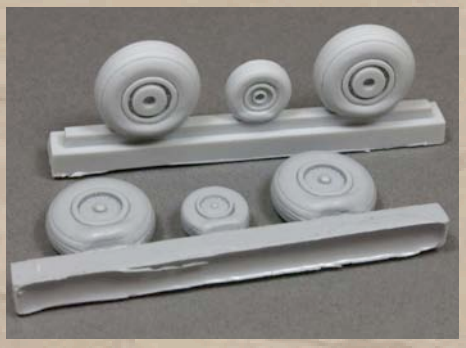
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VERDICT

This is a highly detailed, complex conversion kit that will form the basis of a spectacular model in 1:72. We have to reiterate though that it really is aimed at those with advanced skills, who can cut, align and join large sections, seamlessly. That said, if you can, you will be rewarded with a model that is unlikely to be released as a mainstream plastic kit - a shame, as this is a very impressive version of this class transport aircraft.
We like this conversion a lot and feel that you will too. At £62 it's good value for money given the amount of resin in the box and the possibilities available from its construction. Very highly recommended!
Thanks to Wingman for the review sample.

EDUARD

www.eduard.com

Following the release of Revell's superb 1:32 Fw190F-8, Eduard has created a whole raft of additional sets that will transform the kit into an absolute showstopper. This month we have the first three packages to look at, each being a heady combination of exquisite resin parts and well-defined, sharply etched, brass details.

Close examination of the individual pieces offered in each of these comprehensive updates reveals some of the most impressive detail we have seen in some time. The engine set in particular, being testament to the strides that companies have taken recently to create detail and complexity that even a few years ago, many would have thought impossible.

There is no getting away from the quality of these kits and the detail that they offer. Beginning with the 'Big Sin' set we have a package that will allow the cockpit, gun bay and flap bays to be detailed beyond levels that the Revell kit simply cannot offer. We were particularly taken with the gun bay; here, details around the two MG131 cannons take some getting used to, the delicacy of the casting and the way that so many cables and other details had been moulded in situ, was simply amazing. Looking at them now, I'm still wondering how all of that detail can be painted! The cockpit is similarly impressive, with no kit parts being used to complete the build, Eduard's resin and etched parts will create a superb rendition of the '190's cockpit. Though you can use the parts from the 'Big Sin' set to great effect, you could also embellish the effect with the self-adhesive interior set offered in the 'Big Ed' set as well, the pre-painted instrument consoles perhaps adding another level of gloss - you pay your money, you take your choice!

But it is perhaps the engine set that is the most impressive, replacing as it does the whole of the front end of Revell's kit, from the firewall forward. The kit is extraordinarily detailed, complex and complete - it really is a kit in itself! Details around the radial engine are matched by those seen around the gear box and radiator, these areas being further embellished with delicate engine mounts and exhausts, a full set of finely etched brass details adding such treats as the ignition cables and latches for the open engine access panels. It's all terribly complete and utterly mesmerising.

Finally, we have the 'Big Ed' set of etched parts that offer the flaps seen earlier, a self-adhesive cockpit fret, some pre-painted seatbelts in etch and a set of canopy masks - the quality of which many of you will be familiar with from previous sets.

SUPER-DETAILS FOR REVELL'S 1:32 WÜRGER...





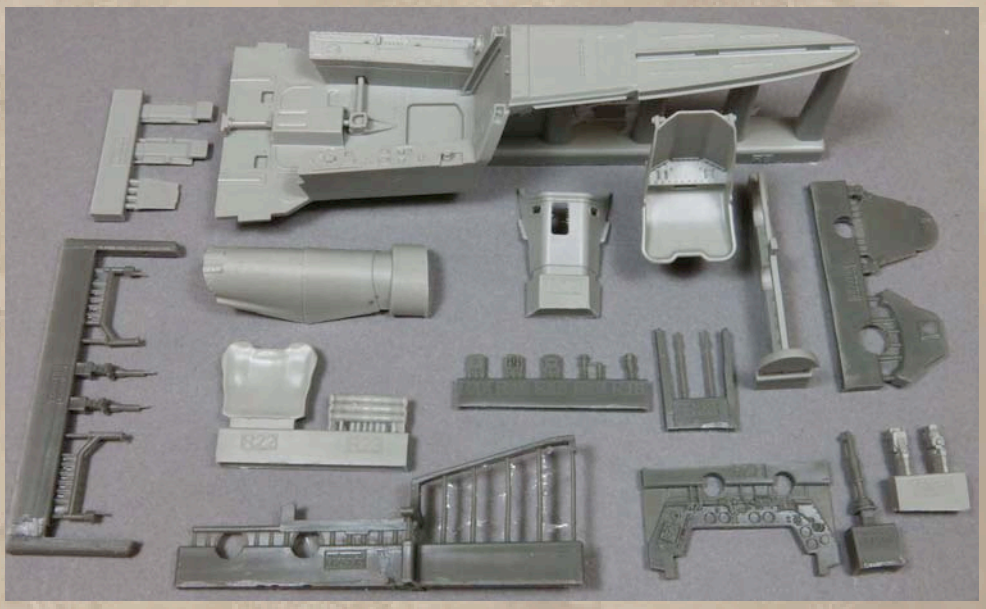
SCALE 1:32

Fw190F-8 Part 1
SIN63206

Designed For: Revell
Material: Resin/PE
Price Guide: £47.30

Package contains the following separately available products:

- Brassin Fw190F-8 Cockpit - 632056
- Brassin Fw190F-8 MG131 Gun Bay - 632060
- Fw190F-8 Landing Flaps - 323721









EDUARD
www.eduard.com

SCALE 1:32

Fw190F-8 Engine
632063

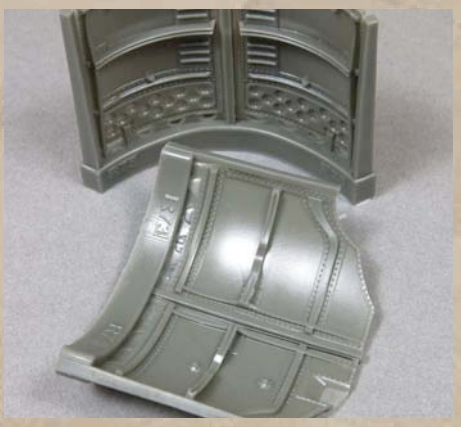
Designed For: Revell
Material: Resin/PE
Price Guide: £30.60











SCALE 1:32

Fw190F-8 - 'Big Ed' Set
BIG3354

Designed For: Revell
Material: PE
Price Guide: £32.30

Package contains the following separately available products:

- Fw190F-8 Landing Flaps - 32372
- Fw190F-8 Seatbelts - 32843
- Fw190F-8 Interior S.A.
- Fw190F-8 Canopy Mask - JX181



VERDICT

As with the Wingman conversion kit seen earlier, most of these sets are not for the beginner; taking the cost out of the equation to begin with, the sheer amount of resin and etch in each one and the need to be surgically precise during both clean up and construction, elevates them into the advanced category. And then there's the painting of each piece. With each incremental rise in the level of detail found in sets such as these, you have a rise in the need to bring out that detail with paint, anything less than carefully applied layers, being a recipe for disaster. The engine for instance is so complex both in design and replication, that you will have to carefully plan ahead in order to work out how best to construct the parts, before applying paint and then moving on to the addition of details. The instructions are explicit both in terms of construction and painting, but we feel that a degree of further study and planning will also be needed to ensure that nothing is left out, or missed with the paintbrush.
What else can we say? Superb and highly recommend - that should just about cover it!
Thanks to Eduard for the samples seen this month.

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- Published by Mushroom Model Publications
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- ISBN 978-83-63678-79-1
- 48pp hardback, 305 x 217mm

We really like this format, portrait on the outside, landscape on the inside. This ideally suits the subject. MMP give us a book full of beautiful side view profiles of Mustangs, one of which is a giant 4 x page width gatefold. The Mustangs are all in schemes flown by Aces, several but not all flown from bases in England. The final Mustang shown in this book was flown by Lt. Louis Edward Curdes, who scored ten victories. He was one of only three American pilots to score kills against German, Italian and Japanese aircraft. Many of the schemes have been published in decal form so this book will be an ideal way of searching for a Mustang scheme to apply to your build.

Each side profile is titled with the pilot's and his aircraft's details with some brief notes. Amongst the Mustangs shown are 'Big Beautiful Doll', 'Passion Wagon' and 'Glamorous Glen III'. At the end of the book is a double page table of Mustang Aces and a page of 1:72 plans showing how 'natural metal' Mustangs were painted. Much of the wing area had the panel lines filled and sanded smooth then painted aluminium and polished smooth to reduce drag. An extra 10 mph can make all the difference in combat.

This is an excellent — if short — book on Mustang schemes and will give those with a Mustang build in mind, that pre-build inspiration.

Thanks to MMP for the review book. See their web site, mmpbooks.biz or ask your favourite specialist book supplier for a copy. (Alan Firbank)



DEIGO QUIJANO ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AIRCRAFT MODELLING TECHNIQUES NO. 3 PAINTING

- Edited by Mig Jimenez
- Published by AMMO of Mig Jimenez
- Guide Price £28.99
- ISBN: 978-84-943891-8-4
- 200pp softback, 300 x 213mm

This is the third volume in this remarkable five-part set of aircraft kit building and finishing manuals. They really are the 'dog's doo-dahs' and will ultimately turn us all into championship-winning expert modellers – if only!! Volumes 1 and 2 showed us how to build a kit, detail and paint the interior and now we have the low-down on how to finish the outside of the model.

Despite having a model on the go much of the time for the last 25 years and generally turning out a presentable result, I have felt somewhat left behind by some of the finishing techniques that we have seen introduced in recent years. Techniques under the headings of pre-shading, filters, modulation, etc. are all a bit of a mystery. I suspect there are a few readers in the same boat. We all know the finish we are hoping to achieve and have our views on the appearance of our finished model as a representation of the real thing. How often do we look at finished models and think that the finishes are amazing, but not really resembling the actual aircraft? It is all a matter of taste and opinion. Whatever your taste, you will find a comprehensive guide to achieving your preferred end result in this book.

We begin with preparation of the built model for painting and undercoating/priming. Notes with the excellent photos explain the value in cleaning the model's surface with a lint-free cloth and alcohol to remove dust and greasy finger marks before starting applying paint. We have loads of information on spraying camouflaged or monochrome finishes and the various methods of masking to give hard and feathered edged finishes. Further on, we are guided through the process of applying those tricky mottled and scribble schemes, so favoured by the Luftwaffe and Italian Air Force during WWII.

A section on achieving beautiful metal finishes begins by mentioning several of the types of paints that can be used. Each step is illustrated with lovely photos. No longer need we shy away from a natural metal subject. There is more metalwork described in a section on how to apply metal and winter camouflage chipped finishes where the base surface/colour is exposed through the top coat of paint.

As we work our way through these amazing techniques we arrive at a chapter on how to simulate wood effects on our models using paint and decals. As WWI subjects are now so popular, this will be useful to those who are into this genre.

So, we have a perfectly painted model and now we arrive at the Achilles Heel of many projects: applying the decals so that the markings look part of the paintwork. How often do we see those tiny stencilling details with visible carrier film spoiling the finish on an otherwise excellent model? Almost thirty pages are dedicated to applying decals or painted markings. We see how to use the kit decals to make masks in order to paint insignia and code letters. It all looks deceptively simple in the photos and descriptions. No doubt making masks and spraying will take a little longer, but the result can be much better.

The final pages are devoted to the use of various techniques to finish off, such as using ink washes, panel line shading and adding a little dirt and dust to the almost finished model.

Some of the finishes will please and others will grate. Inked-in panel lines are not to everyone's taste, but it is all down to personal choice and if it pleases you, you are shown how to achieve that result.

This is a superb addition to the set that has appeared at roughly six monthly intervals during 2015 and I can't wait to get my hands on the final two issues in 2016. The subject of the next one is Weathering. I will be interested to see how that differs from much that we have seen in this volume. I have placed an order for the next two volumes and readers who enjoy these books are advised to do the same. Each new issue seems to sell-out very quickly so a pre-order will hopefully avoid a wait for more to arrive.

Thanks to the Aviation and Military Book Centre for our early copy of No.3.
(Alan Firbank)



DASSAULT MIRAGE F1

- By Frédéric Lert
- Published by Historie & Collections
- Guide Price £21.95 or 24.95 Euros
- ISBN: 978-2-35250-407-8
- 128pp softback, 240 x 200mm

In many respects this book is very similar to the Mirage 2000D profile. This too is all printed in French with many stunning photos covering the F1C, F1CR, F1CT and F1B with a look at the export versions too from 1973 to 2014. For those who are able to appreciate the French copy, the book begins with a history of the F1 series before moving on to the F1 in service.

We see the transition from F1s in their original blue over silver scheme to the different camouflage colours that were applied in their later years of operation in different theatres. These are shown in photos throughout the book with several pages dedicated to profile artwork. The F1 has carried some stunning special schemes with several illustrated in tiger schemes applied for Tiger Meets that are shown in colour profiles and photographs in a section devoted to specials. We have some good reference to cockpit interiors, while not in great depth will still be a good help.

The book concludes with a section on export F1s showing schemes used by customer nations in photos and artwork profiles. It is a shame that we don't have a handful of good kits of the F1. It's a modern jet used in numbers by several nations so what is holding back the kit producers? This could be an excellent reference in waiting! (Alan Firbank)

AMD-BA MIRAGE 2000D

- By Frédéric Lert
- Published by Historie & Collections
- Guide Price £17.50 or 19.95 Euros
- ISBN: 978-2-35250-406-1
- 82pp softback, 240 x 200mm

I admire the French. We have seen several recent events against the French nation that have met with immediate response, rather than talking about what to do for weeks/months. The French have an airforce of capable jets and they are not slow in using them when the need arises. This month we have two books looking at two Mirage aircraft, this one on the 2000D and the next on the F1 series.

If you have seen the Mirage 2000D flying as we did at RIAT last summer, who could fail to be impressed by the sight of the big delta-winged fighter/bomber being displayed? It looks very purposeful with its two large tanks under the wings that appear to be ever-present. The text is all in French but despite the fact that my elementary French skills are not up to reading much of the copy, this book will be kept handy for when I crack open the box of a Mirage 2000D kit.

The book is full of excellent photo of the big Mirage in all sorts of situations; in the air, on the ground and in many different locations. One is shown moving away from its HAS at Kandahar looking like it was caught in a sandstorm a little earlier, quite a contrast from the usual clean aircraft. Some air-to-air top shots show some interesting weathered paintwork too. Several photos give us good reference material for the types of weapons that the 2000Ds carry and we have a handful of cockpit interior shots too. At the back of the book there are six pages of profile artwork showing the units operating the 2000D and then a series of pages showing photos of all of the Mirage 2000Ds produced from 601 to 686.

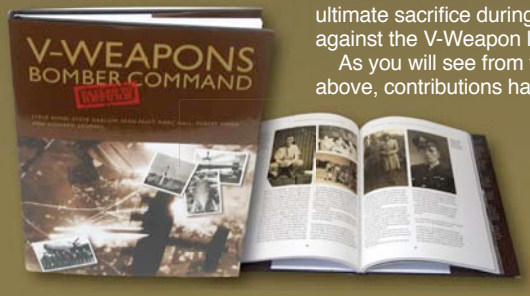
There's some good kits of the Mirage 2000D around and this book will provide you will just about all you would need photographically to go forward with a build. (Alan Firbank)



V-WEAPONS BOMBER COMMAND FAILED TO RETURN

- By Steve Bond, Steve Darlow, Sean Feast, Marc Hall, Robert Owen and Howard Sandall
- Published by Fighting High Ltd.
- Guide Price £19.95
- ISBN: 978-0-9926207-9-0
- 128pp hardback, 282 x 220mm

When I first set eyes on this book, I thought I was looking at the story of the destruction of the V-Weapons sites in northern France. That is partly true, what I had initially missed was the red 'rubber stamp' 'Failed to Return' logo just under the book's title. What was thought to be book of stories about successful raids on Hitler's terror weapons is in fact stories of brave aircrew making the ultimate sacrifice during their missions against the V-Weapon launch sites.



As you will see from the list of authors above, contributions have been made from different sources, each telling of a bombing raid that went badly wrong for the crews taking part. The first in the book is typical. A crew of young men from Britain and the Commonwealth come together to form a Lancaster bomber crew. Several of the crew are introduced and their background is described along with their converging paths to become an operational bomber crew.

When joining a squadron, they train and practice until the crew is judged to be combat ready and the night of their first operational flight to France draws near. At this time, shortly before D-Day, a massive effort is launched against V1 sites. The crew leaves RAF Mildenhall for their target and drop bombs on the markers left by a Pathfinder Mosquito. On leaving the target they are caught by a German night fighter and their Lancaster is crippled by cannon fire. Five of the crew escape the doomed aircraft but the pilot and mid-upper gunner die in the crash.

This is the story of that crew and several others. Of how some of the crew are taken prisoner and how some evade capture and return to England and of how the two who perish in this first chapter are laid to rest in a French churchyard and something of the lasting legacy of that night in May 1944.

This is a very interesting book and for once brings home to us the other, less glamorous side to the war in the air. We read stories of daring deeds and success in aerial combat; this is the other, sad and sobering side to the story, well worth taking into account.

This is an excellent set of stories of how some of the many thousands of bomber crew failed to return. Each chapter is illustrated with diagrams, personal letters and photos, many include personal photos of crew, family photos, photos of targets, photos of aircraft and sadly, of graves of the men who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

Thank to Casemate for supplying the above titles for review this month. For availability see their web site: www.casematepublishers.co.uk or phone 01865 241249. (Alan Firbank)

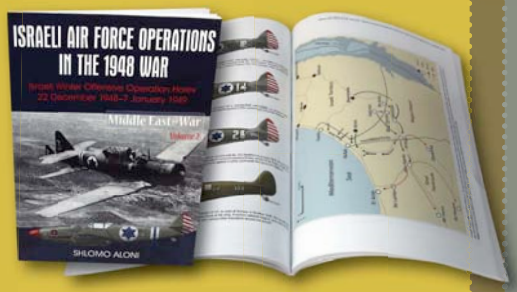
ISRAELI AIR FORCE OPERATIONS IN THE 1948 WAR

- By Shlomo Aloni
- Published by Helion & Co.
- Guide Price £16.95
- ISBN: 978-1-9-910294-11-6
- 72pp softback, 297 x 210mm

It is amazing to think that Israel and its neighbours have still not managed to come to terms with each other's existence. Every so often the tension boils over and there is a short, ferocious fight. This is the account of one such event covering the period from 22nd December 1948 to 7th January 1949. This was the fourth and decisive 'round' in a series of battles with neighbouring Arab states following the establishment of the Jewish state.

Unlike conflicts lasting for months or years, it is possible to cover a short campaign such as this one lasting for only 16 days in minute detail. Many types of aircraft took part in the battle from Dragon Rapides, Austers to B-17s and many other WWII leftovers large and small from both the allies and Germany. It is claimed that the book details every mission flown. Looking through the book, there is plenty of fine detail in the copy supported by many photographs and maps. Short personal accounts of missions make interesting reading. A colour printed section in the centre of the book shows us many different aircraft operated by the Israelis in their colour schemes and some maps in colour.

Those looking for a different finish for a WWII type will find some interesting variations in this book as well as a good read. (Alan Firbank)



SPOTLIGHT ON MIG-29 IN PAF

- By Marek Radomski
- Published by Mushroom Model Publications
- Guide Price £19.00
- ISBN 978-83-63678-96-8
- 52pp hardback, 305 x 217mm



Poland's reliance on Russian-built aircraft is in the past leaving only the MiG-29 still operating alongside their F-16s. Poland's fleet of MiG-29s includes aircraft passed on from the German Air Force and the Czech Air Force as well as those originally supplied from Russia.

This book is produced in the same format as the Spitfire V book we reviewed earlier but this time the opening pages of notes extends to three full pages with useful information on the colours for Poland's MiG-29s at different times and from their different sources. A table on page 3 sets out the colours using FS numbers so that modellers can achieve the correct finishes. MiG-29 kits are available in all of the common scales so this information will be useful to many with an interest in the subject.

The rest of the book consists of lovely MiG-29 scheme artwork with both sides of the aircraft illustrated in many cases with top and bottom views shown too. Some of the special schemes that we have seen on Polish MiG-29s at the RIAT over recent years are also shown. There is the large 8 page gatefold showing a two-seater with a colourful crest on the top. Towards the back of the book, we see one MiG as it was in East German Air Force colours and then in German markings post unification. MiG-29G 29+10 is shown in its colourful scheme to mark the departure of Luftwaffe MiGs from training in the USA in 2004 and in a subsequent grey camouflage scheme.

Those having a Fulcrum kit in mind will find this a useful and inspirational book. (Alan Firbank)

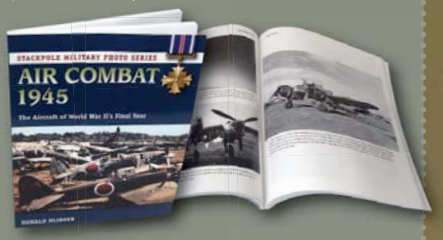
AIR COMBAT 1945 - THE AIRCRAFT OF WORLD WAR II'S FINAL YEAR

- By Donald Nijboer
- Published by Stackpole Books
- Guide Price £16.99
- ISBN: 978-0-8117-1606-2
- 204pp softback, 280 x 2018mm

This is a picture book covering the aircraft that were around at the end of WWII. A few of the photos are of remarkable quality, looking like they were taken yesterday. No doubt enhanced using modern processing software. The book is broken down into sections by nation beginning with the UK, then on to Germany, etc. Aircraft are shown in all sorts of situations, at dispersals, in the air and combat camera stills. British aircraft are shown at home and in operations from bases in Europe as progress was being made after the D-Day landings also in the Far East as the war with Japan was being concluded. Several photos of carrier operations show the dangers of flying at sea. All of the photos are well captions giving information on the aircraft shown and many with unit and location information too. Being the latter months of WWII, many photos show the early jets on all sides of the battle with British Meteors and Vampires and German Arados, 262s, etc with the occasional one-off experimental types. While most of the photos are in black and white, there is a section with some rare colour photos and diagrams as the cover illustration.

The sections on Italy and Russia are brief with Britain, Germany, USA and Japan occupying most of the pages. For those interested in different schemes, many types are shown in allied markings as aircraft were captured and evaluated at the end of the war.

There is some good reference material here for those who build WWII subjects and those looking for aircraft diorama inspiration will have a 'field day'. (Alan Firbank)





SPOTLIGHT ON SUPERMARINE SPITFIRE V

- By Robert Grudzie
- Published by Mushroom Model Publications
- Guide Price £19.00
- ISBN 978-83-63678-81-4
- 52pp hardback, 305 x 217mm

We really like this format, portrait on the outside, mostly landscape on the inside with a huge 8pp gatefold illustrating one of the Spitfire Vs. On the first page, there is text describing the Spitfire V. This is followed by a set of lovely colour artwork profiles of Spitfires. Each illustration is captioned with details of the particular Spitfire shown with dates, some of the pilot's names and special features of the machine. Some examples show upper and lower profile artwork of the aircraft too. As well as the standard fighter schemes; the author has also included some one-off such as a black night fighter Spitfire V and one in overall dark blue. We see a Spitfire on floats, ones serving with the US Air Force, Greece and the Soviets.

Given the number of excellent Spitfire V kits there are on offer, this is an excellent book for those who would like to check out the options available from the war years and soon afterwards. For those up for a challenge, the last one illustrated is a Mk.VB in Luftwaffe markings and a new nose to accommodate a Daimler Benz DB605A-1 engine. (Alan Firbank)

HAWKER HURRICANE

- By Marek Rys
- Published by Mushroom Model Publications
- Guide Price £25.00
- ISBN: 978-83-63678-88-3
- 160pp hardback, 305 x 215mm

This new book on the Hurricane if anything is more comprehensive than the Zero book we reviewed a few months ago and will make an excellent one-stop reference to be used on a Hurricane project. After years of very average Hurricane kits, we now have a handful of excellent ones from which to choose.

The opening chapter tells the story of the birth of the Hurricane and the need for a major change from the RAF's bi-plane fighter fleet to a modern monoplane replacement. The text is illustrated with photos and 1:72 diagrams to show the various marks as the type was developed. We then see about a dozen pages of excellent Hurricane Mk.I colour schemes included one in overall silver dope and one in High-visibility Red and a captured example in Luftwaffe markings. As development progresses, we are guided through other Hurricane marks and versions such as the Sea Hurricane with more excellent photos, plans and artwork.

From about mid-way through the book the author moves on to all of the very useful photographic reference that is invaluable to us modellers. Many crisp colour photos show preserved and restored aircraft with internal and external walk around photos. Many show restorations in progress or aircraft with panels removed for maintenance work. All of this makes me hope that Tamiya adds a 1:32 Hurricane to their increasing range of WWII fighters series.

Whether you are just interested in the Hurricane as a reading and research subject or need reference for a kit build, this new book comes as a highly recommended addition to your library. (Alan Firbank)





263 SQUADRON GLADIATORS OVER THE FJORDS

- By Alex Crawford
- Published by Mushroom Model Publications
- Guide Price £19.00
- ISBN: 978-83-8363678-82-6
- 120pp softback, 297 x 210mm

Again, I have on my desk a review copy of a book with a local connection, Gladiators were built two miles from where I am but this one goes further. One of the Gladiators that took part in the Norwegian fiasco is currently under restoration at the nearby Jet Age Museum at Staverton. This aircraft was shot down by a Bf110 on the 2nd June 1940 with the loss of the pilot, Pilot Officer Jim Wilkie. Gladiator and pilot, still with his aircraft was not discovered until 1948, on the side of a Norwegian mountain. The pilot's remains were buried in Narvik cemetery and his Gladiator was later recovered and is now at Staverton being restored to display condition.

The story is of the deployment of No. 263 Squadron Gladiators to Norway. The mission was to provide air support to Norwegian forces following the landing of German forces in the country in April 1940. Eighteen of the squadron's aircraft were tasked to operate from the surface of a frozen lake towards the south of the country. Freezing weather, the lack of equipment and the enthusiasm of the Luftwaffe saw the small force virtually destroyed in only two days and had to be evacuated.

In a short space of time, the re-equipped squadron was again sent to Norway but this time to an airfield in the north. Despite some success, after only three weeks of action, it was decided to evacuate to safety once again and the squadron's remaining aircraft were flown to HMS Glorious to return home. However, the carrier was attacked by German ships and sunk with the loss of many of the crew and the ten surviving No. 263 Squadron pilots.

This amazing story is told by Alex Crawford and makes a fascinating read, illustrated by many photos from the time from both sides of the brief battle. At the back of the book we find lists of events that make sobering reading. There are references to other Gladiator restoration projects and some excellent colour artwork profiles of some of the squadron's aircraft. No. 263 would fly throughout the war, first in Whirlwinds, then Typhoons and later would return to Gloster aircraft with a spell in the Meteor.

This is a very interesting saga of an ill-conceived mission and the brave people who took part. Those who would like to see the Gladiator under restoration can visit the Jet Age Museum located between Gloucester and Cheltenham. Entrance is free but opening times are restricted, generally to weekends so check their web site. Additional open days such as bank holidays and Wednesdays during the summer can be found on the web site. (Alan Firbank)

POLISH WINGS 19 – MIKOYAN GUREVICH MIG-17 AND POLISH VERSIONS

- By Lechoslaw Musialkowski
- Published by Stratus Books/Mushroom Model Publications
- Guide Price £15.00
- ISBN: 978-83-63678-27-2
- 88pp softback, 297 x 210mm

When the Polish Air Force operated MiG-17s we would only see the occasional poor quality images of aircraft from the Soviet Union as supplied to the Iron Curtain nations. How times have changed when we see excellent reference books on those types. This recent Polish Wings edition is a great book whether you are building a MiG-17 with the Polish Air Force or one from the many nations that operated the type.

Opening the book, we find a very useful (almost) A3 sized colour plan sheet showing a stencilling plan for those small maintenance messages applied to the airframe of the MiG-17. As well as locations, each one is printed at the foot of the each in an easy to read size. Poland operated MiG-17 for an astonishing length of time, from the early 1950s until the early 1990s. The book tells the story in text, illustrated with excellent photos (many in colour) with colour profiles and colour references. Photos show details of the aircraft with weapons loads and close-ups of undercarriage, airbrakes, etc. All good if you are building one of the several kits that we now have at our disposal.

Thanks to Mushroom Model Publications for their review books. See their web site, mmpbooks.biz or ask your favourite specialist book supplier for a copy. (Alan Firbank)



NEW RELEASES: DECALS

This month our decal reviews have a Nordic flavour with sheets from Vingtor from Norway and Arctic Decals from Finland. Both companies were showing their new sheets at Scale ModelWorld in November. We have seen some of Vingtor's excellent sheets in the past but Arctic will be a new name to many. Arctic Decals demonstrated a new product that was at that time under development and will be of great interest to civil aircraft modellers. This took the form of self-adhesive chrome window frames. The frames looked like chrome and are not hampered by carrier film. The frames are made to fit the windows in specific kits. Check www.arcticdecals.com for progress.

VINGTOR

www.vingtor.net



de Havilland Mosquito FB Mk.VI 333 (N) Sqn, RAF – Spring 1945 (Sheet No. 32-125)

One sheet, three sets of decals for use on Tamiya's superb kit. No. 333 Squadron was a Norwegian unit and the markings are appropriate as the squadron returned to Stavanger in Norway at the end of the war in Europe.

- Mosquito KK-E, RF724 in the standard scheme of overall Medium Sea Grey with a pattern of Dark Green on the upper surfaces.
- Mosquito KK-P, RF769 in the Banff Wing colours of Extra Dark Sea Grey on the upper surfaces with Sky undersides.
- Mosquito KK-G, RF831 in overall Medium Sea Grey with a pattern of Dark Green on the upper surfaces.

The sheet comes with one set of roundels, etc.



Canadair Sabre Mk.5 Boeing Chase Planes (Sheet No. 48-126)

For those who fancy a very different finish on their F-86 Sabre models we have two colourful schemes for chase planes used by the RCAF from 1962 until the early 1990s.

- Sabre Mk.5 N8686F in overall pale yellow with semi-gloss black around the cockpit area and areas in natural metal such as the wing leading edges and rudder. I can't see any specific reference to the pale yellow. A search on the serial number may reveal a picture of the plane to help identify the pale yellow.
- Sabre Mk.5 N8686F in overall white with red trim and semi-gloss black around the cockpit area. It is thought that this is a different jet with the same civil registration number. No matching issues with this one; white is white – sometimes.



Douglas C-47A 'Dakota' 335 Squadron RNAF (Sheet No. 72-124)

Five sets of markings for Norwegian Dakotas in attractive schemes to go on to any of the current selection of 1:72 Dakotas. Some of these Dakotas will test your masking techniques.

- C-47A 43-15613 BW-K in overall aluminium with black on the inner parts of the engine nacelles(?) and under the rear fuselage.
- C-47A 43-48247 BW-E in overall aluminium with a white cabin top, black under the rear fuselage and blue trim around the engine nacelles.
- C-47A 43-15208A BW-M in overall aluminium with a white cabin top, black under the rear fuselage, blue trim around the engine nacelles and areas of Day-Glo Red on the wing tips, around the rear fuselage and nose.
- C-47A 43-15613 BW-K in overall aluminium with a white cabin top, blue trim around the engine nacelles and areas of Day-Glo Red on the wing tips, around the rear fuselage and nose.
- C-47A 42-93797 BW-L in overall aluminium with a white cabin top, black under the rear fuselage, blue trim around the engine nacelles and areas of Day-Glo Red on the wing tips, around the rear fuselage and nose.

Thanks to Vingtor for these review samples. Check their web site www.vingtor.net for availability.

ARCTIC DECALS

We have five sets of decals from Arctic, (www.arcticdecals.com) which will please civil aircraft modellers.

Stinson Reliant SR-9FD (Sheet No. ARC48-013)

One half sized decal sheet with the markings for one Texaco liveried Stinson. The aircraft is overall Texaco Red with Gloss White trim around the cowling, running in a tapering line along to the tail and a white rudder, provided on the decal sheet.
The instructions include copious notes on the aircraft and a two-sided sheet of reference photos.





Stinson Reliant SR-9FD (Sheet No. ARC48-014)

Another colourful Stinson Reliant but this one is in American Airlines livery. The overall colour is Insignia Blue with International Orange trim around the cowling, control surfaces and a lightning flash along the fuselage sides.
The tricky orange areas are supplied on the decal sheet leaving the flying surfaces to be painted.

Finnair Fokker F-27 Friendship (Sheet No. ARC72-056)

This is a good set for a Finnair F-27 with the option of three difference Finnish Civil Register codes; OH-LKA, OH-LKB and OH-LKC. The F-27 is an attractive scheme with a white fuselage and a wide blue cheat line along the fuselage sides, the depth of the windows. The lower fuselage is light grey along with the upper and lower wings and tail surfaces.
As well as the decal placement instructions we have a double sided sheet of sketches showing interior and undercarriage information.





Polet Airlines Saab 340 (Sheet No. ARC72-057)

Another excellent multi-part set of markings for a medium-sized passenger aircraft but a tricky livery to apply. Polet is a small Russian airline based at Voronezh who operates a worldwide passenger and cargo service. The aircraft is white with the tail fin, lower fuselage and bottom half of the engines in dark blue. A Humbrol paints mix for the dark blue is mentioned on the instructions. To help with masking, Arctic supplies a large sheet of pre-cut masking material and a small instructions sheet showing where the supplied masks should be applied. Civil codes are supplied for five aircraft of the Polet fleet's Saabs.

Aeroanutica Macchi C.94 (Sheet No. 72-051)

Here we have another comprehensive set of decals and for an even more unusual subject, the C.94 flying boat from the 1930s. Italian government owned company Ala Littoria operated these aircraft in the 1930s as a commercial airline and then flew transport duties for the Italian forces during WWII. The company disbanded at the end of the war.
Decals are supplied for five aircraft in colours applied pre-war and then as used during WWII. The flying boats were painted silver before the war and then mainly grey during the war. As well as the decals we have a sheet of cabin window chrome frames. These are pre-cut and are very fine and will require careful handling.

The Arctic Decals sets are very impressive with lots of information and very good instructions. Obviously a lot of thought has gone into these sheets and Arctic do what they can to make the modeller's job as straightforward as possible.



XTRADECAL

www.hannants.co.uk

Two new 1:72 scale sheets from Hannants this month, one for the new Airfix Whitley and one for the impressive C-54 Skymaster from Revell.

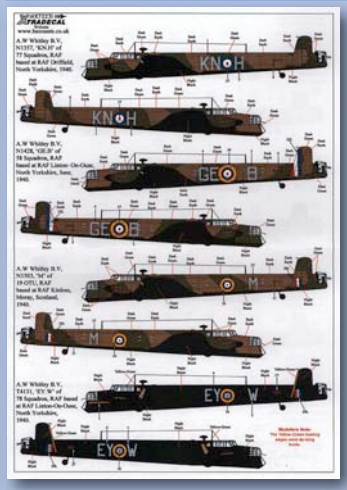
A.W. Whitley B.Mk.V/GR.VII (Sheet No. X72231)

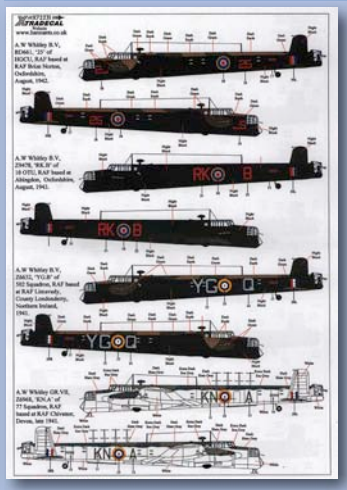
Despite just being a single decal sheet, we have ten options to choose from.

Whitley B.Mk.V N1357, KN-H with No. 77 Squadron at RAF Driffield in 1940. The scheme is standard Bomber Command at the time, a pattern of Dark Green and Dark Earth on the upper surfaces with Night Black undersides. Unless otherwise mentioned, this scheme applies to all.

- Whitley B.Mk.V N1428, GE-B with No. 58 Squadron at RAF Linton-On-Ouse in June 1940.
- Whitley B.Mk.V N1503, "M" with No. 19 OTU at RAF Kinloss in 1940.
- Whitley B.Mk.V T4131, EY-W with No. 78 Squadron at RAF Linton-On-Ouse in 1940. An overall Night Black scheme was applied to this aircraft.
- Whitley B.Mk.V BD661, "25" with HGCU at RAF Abingdon in 1942.
- Whitley B.Mk.V Z9478, RK-B with No. 10 OCU at RAF Abingdon in 1943 and this aircraft was finished in overall Night Black.
- Whitley B.Mk.V Z6632, YG-Q with No. 502 Squadron at RAF Limavady in Northern Ireland in 1941.
- Whitley GR.VII Z6968, KN-A with No. 77 Squadron at RAF Chivenor in 1941. This Whitley was fitted with a series of aerials on the upper fuselage and finished in Coastal Command colours of a pattern of Dark Slate Grey and Extra Dark Sea Grey on the upper surfaces and otherwise White.
- Whitley GR.VII Z9190, YG-B with No 502 Squadron at RAF St. Eval in 1942 in the Coastal Command scheme above.
- Whitley GR.VII Z9217, MH-F with No. 51 Squadron at RAF Chivenor in 1942 and the same Coastal Command scheme above.







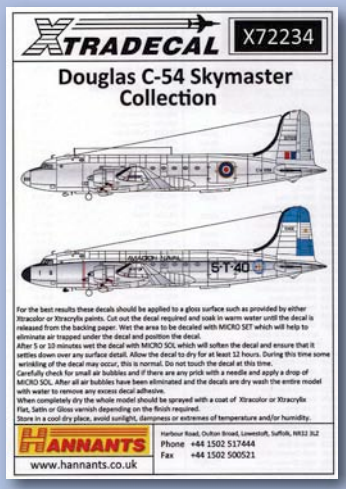


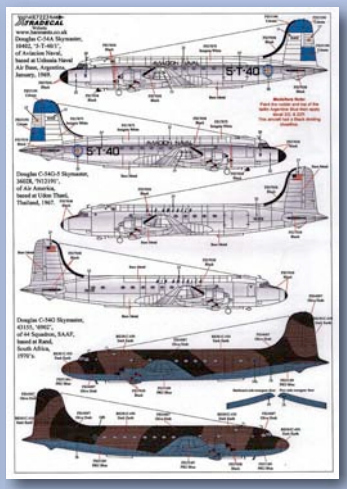
Douglas C-54 Skymaster Collection (Sheet No. X72234)

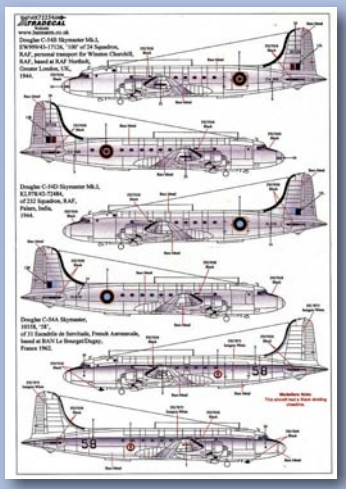
Eight schemes for the impressive Revell 1:72 C-54 Skymaster, something for everyone including two for the overall bare metal finish dodgers.

- C-54G B-1004 with Civil Air Transport (CAT) at Haneda International Airport in Japan in July 1960. The finish is overall natural metal with black leading edges on the wings and tail planes and a black anti-glare panel ahead of the windscreen.
- VC-54 44-9117 with the Washington Air National Guard also at Haneda in July 1960. First, the good news for some, the only natural metal areas is the engine cowlings. Air Defence Grey is applied to the rest of the aircraft with the exception of the Insignia White cabin roof and tail fin.
- C-54B Skymaster Mk.I, EW999/43-17126, '100' with No. 24 Squadron at RAF Northolt in 1944. This Skymaster was used on several occasions as Winston Churchill's personal transport. This aircraft is in a natural metal finish with black de-icing trim on the leading edge of the wings, tail planes and tail fin.
- C-54D Skymaster Mk.I, KL978/42-72484 with No. 232 Squadron at Palam, India in 1944. The finish is the same as Winston Churchill's aircraft with but with SE Asia roundels and fin flash.
- C-54A 10358, '58' with 31 Escadrile de Servitude, French Navy at Le Bourget in 1962. A black cheatline runs from the windscreen to the tip of the tail. Below the line we have bare metal and above the line the cabin is painted Insignia White.
- C-54A 10402, '5-T-40/1' with the Argentinian Navy in 1969. Again, a black cheatline runs from the windscreen to the tip of the tail with white above and the rest of the aircraft is natural metal with blue panels on the white tail fin.
- C-54G-5 36028, 'N12191' with Air America in Thailand in 1967. This Skymaster is overall natural metal with the Air America legend on the cabin and a small American flag on the tail fin.
- C-54G 43155, '6902' with No. 44 Squadron, South African Air Force in the 1970s. A pattern of Olive Drab and Dark Earth applies to the upper surfaces with PRU Blue undersides. The aircraft is strangely devoid of markings with only two very small SAAF badges on the rear fuselage.

Thanks to Hannants for supplying their four recent releases for review.









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The Shuttleworth Museum's airworthy example shown in both camouflage and Special Operations black finishes. Full close-up detail. (62 images)

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Swedish 1919-era fighter trainer that served the Swedish air arm for many years. Example depicted is a faithful reproduction. (55 images)

Supermarine Spitfire MK.XVI CD100
Last of the Merlin-engined Spifires. This collection depicts the cut-down fuselage, bubble cockpit canopy later version. (116 images)

Supermarine Spitfire MK.IX CD99
The most numerous version of the classic Spitfire that turned the tables on the Luftwaffe's Focke Wulf Fw 190. (90 images)

Supermarine Spitfire MK XIV CD98
2nd of the Griffon-engined Spits (Mk.XII was first), the bigger engine forced a change of the classic Spifire shape. (58 images)

Supermarine Spitfire MK Vc CD97
Shuttleworth Museum's airworthy example presented in it's latest form with classic rounded wingtip planform. (160 plus images)

Supermarine Seafire Mk17 CD96
The Seafire 17 was no navalised Spit. A true ground-up naval fighter. (64 images)

Stinson 105 CD95
Light, private aircraft of the 1940-50s era, with lots of character. (75 images)

Steen Skybolt CD94
Attractive U.S. aerobatic biplane, presented in full detail. (89 images)

Sopwith Triplane CD93
The last example of the 'Tripehound' is the one built (in 1980!) from original Sopwith drawings by Northern Aero Works and given sequential manufacturer's number by Sir Thomas Sopwith himself in recognition of the outstanding workmanship. Extensive detail. (120 images)

Sopwith Pup CD92
The charismatic Sopwith Scout (to give its correct designation) is a great scale modellers' favourite. Example depicted is the one preserved and regularly flown at the Shuttleworth Collection, Old Warden. (50 images)

S.E.5A CD91
Shuttleworth Museum's airworthy example presented in full detail. (100 plus images)

Ryan Pt-22 CD90
US military primary trainer aircraft that served with both US Army and Navy, thus providing ab-initio flight training for the majority of US airmen of the WW2 period. A highly attractive aircraft. 90 images of the preserved, airworthy aircraft, hangared at the Shutleworth Collection, Old Warden.

Republic P-47D CD89
Bubble-canopy version of the much loved 'Jug', photographed in fine detail. (105 images)

Polikarpov Po-2 CD88
The world's most numerously produced aircraft of all time, the P0-2 was a great maid-of-all-work used by both military and civil groups in the old Soviet Union and its satellite states. Example depicted is pristine, and now in storage at Old Warden. (170 images)

Polikarpov I-15 CD87
The ultra agile Russian biplane fighter aircraft that saw widespread service prior to and in the early years of WW2 and during the Spanish civil war. Example illustrated is a superbly restored machine. (100 images)

Pitts S.1 CD86
Homebuilt example by Bob Millinchip, as seen at 2002 PFA Rally. Complete detail study. (36 images)

Piper Tomahawk CD85
Cranfield Flying School example of this civil ab-initio trainer aircraft. (54 images)

Piper Super Cub CD84
The later, 'cleaned-up' version of the famous Piper J-3, with more elegant engine cowl. Two examples shown. (80 images)

Piper L-4 Grasshopper CD83
Military version of the famous Piper J-3 Cub used during WW2 and close reconnaissance and spotter aircraft and for many other tasks. (80 images)

Percival Provost CD82
Airworthy, preserved example of the RAF piston engined basic trainer used in the 1950s. Full detail. (30 images)

Percival Mew Gull CD81
Famous 1930s racing and record setting aircraft that will forever linked with the achievements of British aviator Alex Henshaw. (35 images)

North American T28 CD80
The advanced trainer aircraft that served in many air arms worldwide and also became a counter-insurgency ground attack aircraft. Examples illustrated are from France, where the type served for many years as the 'Fenec'. (100 plus images)

North American P51D Mustang CD79
The definitive bubble canopy Merlin Mustang. In detail, showing several restored examples. This is the Fantasy of Flight Museum's overpolished example, but the close-up detail is all there. (102 images)

North American P51B/C CD78
First of the Rolls Royce Merlin engined Mustangs, this collection depicts the Fantasy of Flight Museum's restored example, with overly polished plain metal surfaces. Much detail. (102 images) Also, 41 images of The Fighter Collection's P-51C in bare metal restoration, showing much surface and internal airframe detail. A real bumper bundle! (over 140 images)

North American B25 Mitchell CD77
Fantasy of Flight Museum's example. Photographed soon after superb restoration. Full nose to tail detail. (74 images)

North American AT6 Harvard CD76
AT-6, SNJ, Texan, Harvard – call it what you will. 55,000 were built – this example is in U.S. Army colours, with comprehensive close-up detail, nose to tail. (76 images)

North American A36 Invader CD75
The ground attack variant of the Alison engined P-51A. Photos, in detail, of the world's only airworthy example. (69 images)

Morane Saulnier MS406 CD74
French WW2 fighter that fought in the Battle of France, 1940. Swiss restored example (92 images)

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EVENTS DIARY

Model shows for 2016



February 21st

Huddersfield Show at Huddersfield Leisure Centre, Spring Grove Street, Huddersfield, HD1 4BP
New venue for 2016! Doors open 10.00-16.00
For further information contact: Geoff Milnes on 01132893152 or 07879446554
Alan Paul on 07811358355.
Admission price: Adults £4 Concessions £2
Contact: Geoff Milnes,
email: huddersfieldshow@gmail.com,
website: www.huddersfieldmodelshow.co.uk,
phone: 01132893152

January 17th

Bolton IPMS Scale Model Show 2016 to be held at St Joseph's RC High School, Chorley New Road, Horwich, Nr. Bolton BL6 6HW (Just off Junction 6 of the M61). The show runs from 10:00 - 16:00. As usual, there will be a good mix of Traders, Club and SIG displays. Prices for the show are as follows: Adults £4, OAP £3, Children (Under 16) £2, Families (2 adults and 2 children) £10. There is free parking at the venue and hot and cold refreshments will be available to purchase on the day.
Website: http://www.ipmsbolton.co.uk/
Find them on Facebook – search 'Bolton IPMS'

February 28th

North Devon Model Show at Fremington Village Hall, Higher Road, Femington, Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 3BG
Hosted by the North Devon Model Society. show opening times are 10am-4pm. Refreshments will be available and full details will be on our web site soon. Admission price: £3.00 adult, children under 16 free with each paying adult, Minors 12-16 on their own, or £1.50 if under that age.
Contact: Steve Macey,
email: stevemacey@me.com,
phone: 07703003719

March 19th & 20th

Southern Expo 2016 to be held at Hornchurch Sports Centre, Harrow Lodge Park, Hornchurch Road, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 1JU. 10am to 5pm Saturday & 10am to 4pm Sunday. Entry: Adults £3.00, Children £1 & Senior Citizens £2. Open Competition (Sunday only) – the Senior competition is being sponsored by Models For Sale (http://www.modelsforsale.com)
For further details visit the website at http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/southernexpo/
email SouthernExpo@tiscali.co.uk

April 3rd

Shropshire Scale Model Show at RAF Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
(www.rafmuseum.org.uk/cosford/default.aspx).
All the regular attractions Trade Stands, Club Displays. Open Model Competition Refreshments, Tombola. Park & Ride Free Entry! (Normal Museum Parking Charges WILL Apply)
For details of the Museum and how to get there see website. Admission price: Free show entry (parking charges apply).
Organiser: Gary Stevens,
email: gary473@btinternet.com,
website: http://shropmodels.org.uk

April 24th

Model Kraft 2016 to be held at Statonbury Leisure Centre, Milton Keynes, MK14 6BN
1000-1600 hrs. Admission price: Adults £5.00, Senior Citizens £3.00, Children Free.

May 28th 2016

IPMS Torbay & South Devon "Model 2016" to be held at Torquay Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, Devon, TQ1 3DR
IPMS Torbay & South Devon Incorporating Torbay Military Modelling Society Proudly Present MODEL 2016. Exhibitions, Club Displays, Competitions, Trade Stalls. Open 9.30am - 4.30pm. Annual open Competition Theme: the Cold War. Fundraising in support of Help for Heroes. Admission price: Adults: £2.50 Over 65's: £1.50 Under 13's: £1.00 Family: £5.00
Organiser: IPMS Torbay & South Devon,
email:
torbayandsouthdevon.ipms@gmail.com,
website: www.ipmstorbay.com

June 19th 2016

MAFVA Nationals 2016 at The Burgess Hall, Westwood Rd, Saint Ives, Cambridgeshire, PE27 6WU
The MAFVA (Miniature AFV Association) Nationals will take place on Sunday June 19th June at NEW VENUE! (address below). Full details will be posted on the the MAFVA website Nationals page.
Admission price:
See website for details
Contact: Paul Middleton, MAFVA Liaison Officer,
email:
paul.middleton600@ntlworld.com,
website: www.mafva.net/nationals

June 26th 2016

IPMS Coventry & Warwickshire Model Show to be held at Rowley Road, Coventry, CV3 4FR (www.midlandairmuseum.co.uk). IPMS Coventry & Warwickshire annual model show held a Midland Air Museum. Many trade stands, displaying clubs, tombola & raffle. Refreshments available all day. Open 10am to 4pm. Admission price: Normal museum admission applies and free parking.
Organiser: Paul Crocker,
email:
IPMS.covandwarks@hotmail.co.uk,
website:
www.coventryandwarwickipms.co.uk

September 18th

IPMS Fenland & Spalding Wings & Things 2016 at Spalding High School, Stonegate, Spalding, Lincs, PE11 2PJ
IPMS Fenland & Spalding Present Wings & Things 2016. Exhibitions: Club Displays, SIG's, Traders, Open Competition. Refreshments available. Open 10:00am to 4:00pm Sponsored by Models for Sale. Admission price: Adults £2.00 Over 65's £1.00 Under 16's £1.00
Organiser: Bill Pickering,
email:
ipms.fenlandandspalding@gmail.com,
website:
www.wingsandthings.moonfruit.co.uk,
phone: 01775 710465.

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FOXHOUND

We look at one of the most easterly awaited kits of recent times, AvanteGarde Model's astonishing, 1:48, MiG-31



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WESTLAND'S WORKHORSE

John Wilkes tackles the very attractive Italeri 1/48 Wessex HAS.1

FINAL THOUGHTS

You may recall that last month I discussed the appeal of some of the older kits in our collective stashes and that I was working on the Airfix Vulcan B2. I'd been asked to build this model by my brother in law and so set about seeing if I could complete what is a notoriously difficult kit and hopefully create something neat and tidy from the parts on offer. Well, here it is in all of its delta-winged glory: the Airfix Vulcan!

Having wrestled with this kit for almost two weeks, I have to say that everything you have heard about it is true! It really is an absolute bear to build; the quality of the original design and the subsequent degradation of the moulds have created what has been easily one of the most difficult builds I have attempted in well over 20 years - in fact, it might be the most difficult, ever. Nothing fits, everything needs to be adjusted, sanded, filed and filled and once you do that, you have to prime, re-sand, prime and repeat until the model is smooth enough to paint - it's a huge job!

BUT, IT'S WORTH IT.

With the model sat in front of me ready to be handed over, I can't help but feel proud that I've built a kit that I knew would be tough and that the results look as nice as they do. Though it's great to tackle the newer kits that fall together, modelling to me has always been about the challenge of pushing my own ability and in so doing, learning new skills so that I can create something if not unique, but perhaps unusual. The Vulcan is a kit that has sold well, but you don't often see many built up - maybe that's because they are so difficult! - so the idea that after thirty-odd years of wanting to build one, I now have! Along the way, there have been times when problems needed to be solved, filling needed to be carried out, items scratchbuilt, complex camouflage painted and decalled - I even managed to try out some of Tamiya's fabulous new masking tape! All in all, it was a great project that's resulted in an impressive-looking model.

These kits are a challenge but I think they are worth attempting once in a while. It's good to stretch out, to try a more difficult kit and enjoy the pride you get from completing something tough in the midst of many kits that are a breeze to build. Would I build another Airfix Vulcan? Absolutely not from this kit! But let's be honest, they are likely to create a new-tool at some point, so I'll build one for my collection when, or if, they ever do!

Now, where are my Tamiya kits..?

"It's good to stretch out, to try a more difficult kit and enjoy the pride you get from completing something tough, in the midst of many kits that are a breeze to build"



Setting New Standards for 1:32 Detail...

1:32 DeHavilland Mosquito FB Mk.VI • Item 60326

UK version includes extra sprue with clear engine cowls.

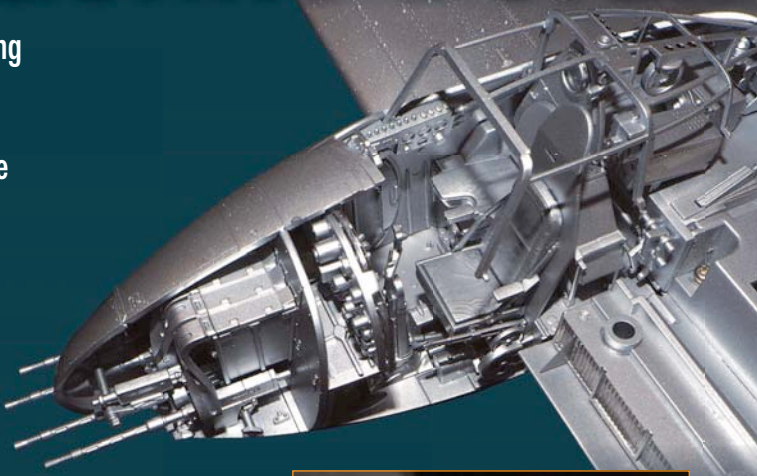
1:32 New Tooling

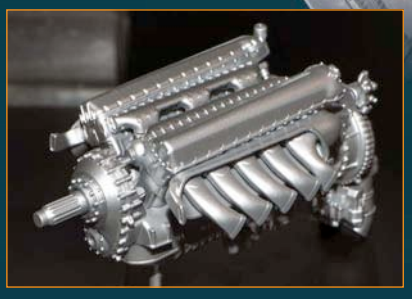


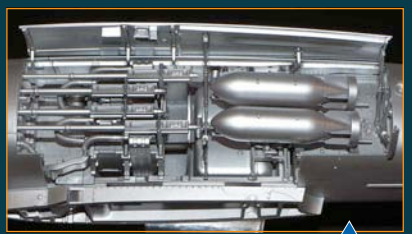
Tamiya Redefine Detail

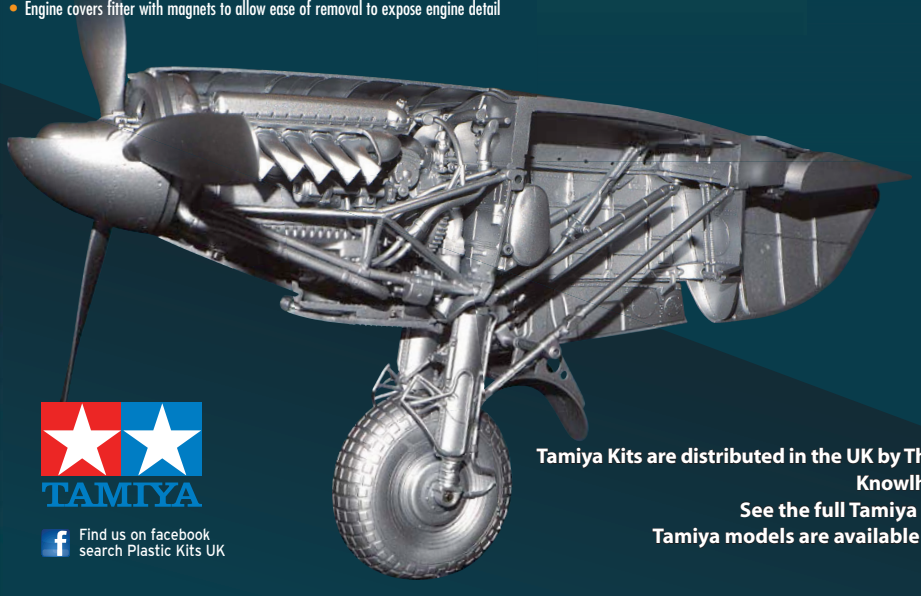
Tamiya's stunning new Mosquito has revealed staggering attention to detail and levels of realism never seen before in any scale. To ensure that all this detail is maximised for the modeller the UK versions will include an extra sprue with clear engine parts.

- Highly-detailed cockpit, plus depiction of four machine guns complete with ammo cases and belts
- The Merlin engines are breathtakingly recreated, including depictions of the supercharger. Just like on the real Mosquito, the engine mount and landing gear struts are integrated
- Tail wheel mud guard and strut are depicted. Left and right sides of horizontal stabilizer are part of the same piece, as on the actual aircraft
- Adjustable flaps
- Choose open or closed bomb bay. 20mm auto cannons and two 500lb bomb parts are found inside
- The model can be assembled with exhausts uncovered or covered
- Detailed 4-piece engine cowling offers a selection of standard or longer intake-fitted tropical filter parts
- Features parts recreating propellers with early variant slim line blades or wider paddle type blades
- Paintable tires use assembly tread sections and capture compression caused by plane weight
- Etch detail parts, markings for 3 versions and 3 crewmen: Pilot, Navigator and Crewman
- Extraordinary levels of detail on canopy parts
- Engine covers fitter with magnets to allow ease of removal to expose engine detail









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Tamiya models are available from all good model shops

THE HOBBY COMPANY LIMITED
www.hobbyco.net



Behold the Wooden Wonder in Stunning 1/32!

1/32 Scale Aircraft Series De Havilland Mosquito FB Mk.VI (Item 60326)

Wingspan:515.5mm
Fuselage Length:394.5mm

Drawn up as a high speed, unarmed bomber, the twin engine De Havilland Mosquito fulfilled that role and so many more for the RAF and other Allied air forces during WWII, taking advantage of performance so astonishing it earned the aircraft its nickname: Wooden Wonder. (That, and the fact it was made largely of wood, in contrast to most of its contemporaries.) The FB Mk.VI fighter-bomber variant, which first appeared in the skies in Spring 1943, packed a punch with four 7.7mm nose-mounted machine guns and four powerful 20mm auto-cannons, plus the ability to carry four 500lb bombs. With around 2,700 produced it was the most prolifically built Mosquito variant, and this high performance, multi-role aircraft was relied on to attack sensitive enemy targets such as SS facilities, V1 flying bomb sites, and munitions factories, taking advantage of its precision low-altitude bombing skills. Now, the Mosquito FB Mk.VI gets the Tamiya treatment with the release of this exquisite model in the 1/32 Scale Aircraft Series.

★The main wing composition of a one-piece root with outer wings attached on either side, follows the real aircraft. ★Rivets are expertly depicted on parts such as engine cowlings and ailerons. ★Flaps and elevators can be assembled in neutral or down positions. ★Choose between standard exhausts or those fitted with flame damper covers, plus standard or tropical engine cowling undersides. ★2 different types of propeller blade parts are included. ★Fit wing undersurfaces with 500lb bombs or drop tanks. ★Comes with 3 marking options.

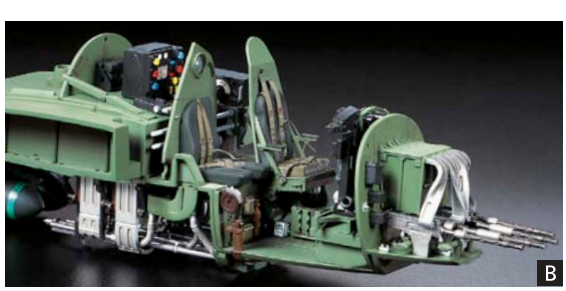


★Comprehensive 12-page B5 full color guide included.



★Included photo-etched parts frets enhance detail on seatbelt, radiator cores and more!











A Merlin 25 engines feature one-stage, two-speed supercharger parts. Engine cowlings can be removed after completion. B Realistic cockpit has detailed renderings of staggered seats and radio equipment. 7.7mm machine guns are recreated right down to ammunition belts. C Fuselage undersurface doors can be assembled as open, closed or a combination. Parts inside recreate the 20mm auto-cannons and two 500lb bombs with aplomb. D Plastic parts expertly capture tire tread pattern and compression. E Seated pilot figure is joined by a choice of navigator figures – seated or climbing ladder.

TAMIYA, INC. 3-7 ONDAWARA, SURUGA-KU, SHIZUOKA 422-8610 JAPAN

★Images show assembled and painted model kits. ★Product may vary from images shown.

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